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*Louis XVI. Marie Antoinette
and Dauphin.*

LA COMTESSE DE CHARNY.

BY

ALEXANDRE DUMAS.

VOL. I.

BOSTON:

LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY.

1890.

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UNIVERSITY PRESS :
JOHN WILSON AND SON, CAMBRIDGE.

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INTRODUCTION.

THOSE excellent readers who are in a certain sort pledged to us, — those who follow us wherever we go, those who (strangely enough) never abandon, even in his errors, a man who, like the author, has undertaken the interesting task of unrolling, leaf by leaf, the story of the monarchy, — these readers well understood, in reading the word *finis* at the close of the last chapter of “Ange Pitou,” that there was some monstrous error therein, which, one day or another, we were bound to explain.

How could it be supposed that an author of any pretensions, however misplaced, an author who is supposed to know beforehand how to make a book, with all the requirements of a book, — as an architect professes to know how to build a house, with all the requirements of a house, or a shipbuilder to construct a ship, with all the requirements of a ship, — how could such an author abandon his house at the third story, or leave his vessel unfurnished with a mainsail?

Moreover, what would become of our Ange Pitou, if the reader took seriously that word *finis*, placed exactly at the most interesting situation of the book, — that is to say, when the King and the Queen were getting ready to quit Versailles for Paris; when Charny was beginning to note that his charming wife, although for five years he had not paid her the least attention, now blushed when

his glance met her eyes, when his hand touched her hand ; when Gilbert and Billot were gazing gravely but resolutely into the Revolutionary abyss before them, excavated by the Royalist hands of Lafayette and Mirabeau, one representing the Popularity of the epoch, the other its Genius ; and finally when poor Ange Pitou, the humble hero of that humble history, was on the road from Villers Cotterets to Pisseleu, holding Catherine across his knees, — a young woman who had swooned over the last farewell of her lover, who was already several fields away, in full gallop over the highway to Paris.

Besides, there are other personages in this romance, secondary it is true, but personages towards whom we are sure our readers have been kindly disposed, and to whom they will still accord a portion of this interest ; and as for ourselves, it is said that when we have once put a drama on the stage, we have a habit of following up, not only our chief heroes, but our minor characters as well, — and even the stage supernumeraries, — into the most shadowy windings of the theatric scene.

There is the Abbé Fortier, a rigid Monarchist, who certainly will not transform himself into a Constitutionnel priest, but will accept persecution rather than take the new oath.

There is the young Sebastien Gilbert, made up of the two natures embroiled at that epoch, of the two elements which had been ten years in a state of fusion, the democratic element, which he inherited from his father, the aristocratic element, derived from his mother.

There is Madame Billot, poor woman, — who is above all a mother, and blind as a mother, — leaving her daughter on the same road which she herself had trod, and returning alone to the farm, already desolated by the departure of Billot.

There is Father Clouis, in his hut in the middle of the forest, who does not yet know whether, with the gun which Pitou has given him, — in exchange for the one which had carried away two or three fingers of his left hand, — he can kill one hundred and eighty-three hares and one hundred and eighty-two rabbits in an ordinary year, and one hundred and eighty-three hares and one hundred and eighty-three rabbits in a leap year, — as he could with the old gun.

Finally there are Claude Tellier and Desiré Maniquet, village Revolutionists, who wish nothing better than to walk in the footsteps of the Revolutionists of Paris, but for whom it is to be hoped that honest Pitou — their captain, their commander, their colonel, in a word, their superior officer — will serve as a guide and curb.

All that we have said can but renew the astonishment of the reader at the position of that word *finis*, so oddly placed at the end of the chapter of which it is the termination, — stationed, as one might say, like the ancient Sphinx, crouched at the entrance of her cavern on the road to Thebes, and proposing an unsolvable enigma to the Bœotian pilgrims.

We will attempt an explanation.

There was a time when the newspapers were publishing simultaneously "The Mysteries of Paris," by Eugene Sue, "The General Confession," by Frederic Soulié, "Mauprat," by George Sand, and "Monte Cristo," "Le Chevalier de Maison Rouge," and "The Women's War," by myself.

Those were good times for serial stories, but bad times for politics.

Who in the world at that time cared about the leading articles of Armand Bertin, Doctor Véron, or Deputy Chambolle?

Nobody.

And the world was right, for if any fact remains about those unlucky Parisian editorials, it is this, — that they were not worth the pains taken with them.

Everything of any value always floats to the surface, and infallibly finds its rightful place somewhere.

There is only one sea which forever swallows up whatever is thrown into it ; that is the Dead Sea.

It appears that it was into this sea that the leading Paris editorials of 1845, 1846, 1847, and 1848 were thrown.

Along with these leaders by Armand Bertin, Doctor Véron, and Deputy Chambolle, were also cast away, pell-mell, the speeches of Thiers and Guizot, of Odilon Barrot and Berryer, of Molé and Duchâtel ; and this wearied Messieurs Duchâtel, Molé, Barrot, Guizot, and Thiers, as it wearied Deputy Chambolle, Doctor Véron, and Armand Bertin.

It is true, as a compensation, that people cut off with the greatest care the feuilletons, or half-sheets, containing "The Mysteries of Paris," "General Confession," "Mauprat," "Monte Cristo," "The Women's War," and "Le Chevalier de Maison Rouge," in order that after these sheets had been read in the morning, they could be put aside to be reperused in the evening ; it is true that these feuilletons brought subscribers to the journals and patrons to the libraries ; it is true they brought history home to the historians and the people ; it is true that they created four millions of readers in France, and fifty millions of foreign readers ; it is true that French thus became the literary language of the nineteenth century, as it had been the diplomatic language of the seventeenth ; it is true that the poet, who thus won money enough to make himself independent, escaped from the thralldom heretofore exercised over him by

aristocracy and royalty; it is true that literature created in society a new nobility and empire, — the nobility of Talent and the empire of Genius; it is true, finally, that all this led to results so honorable for individuals, and so glorious for France, that serious efforts were made to bring to an end this state of things, — one which produced such an overturn that the prominent men of the kingdom became really the men in most repute, and that the reputation, the glory, and even the money of the country were drifting towards those who had truly earned their reward.

The state officials of 1847 hoped, as has been said, to put an end to this scandal, whereupon Odilon Barrot, who always liked to be talked about, conceived an idea of giving, not only good and beautiful speeches on the rostrum, but bad dinners in different localities, where his name was still held in honor.

It was necessary to give a name to these dinners. In France it is of little importance that things should have the name most appropriate to them, provided only that they have some name. These dinners were consequently called Reformatory Banquets.

There was then in Paris a man who, having been a Prince, was made a General; who, after being a General, was exiled; who, after being exiled, was made Professor of Geography; who, having been a Professor of Geography, travelled in America; who, having travelled in America, resided in Sicily; who, having married the daughter of the King of Sicily, returned to France; who, having returned to France, was raised to the rank of Royal Highness, by Charles the Tenth; and who at last, being thus made a Royal Highness by Charles the Tenth, finished by making himself King.

Well, this Prince, this General, this Professor, this Traveller, this King, — in a word, this man, whom both

misfortune and prosperity ought to have taught much, though they had taught him nothing, — this man had an idea of preventing Odilon Barrot from giving his Reformatory Banquets. He lost his head over that idea, never suspecting that it was a *principle* against which he declared war. Now every principle comes from above, and is consequently stronger than whatever comes from below, as every angel is able to overthrow the man with whom he wrestles. Now as Jacob was a man, and the angel overthrew Jacob, so, in these latter days, the Principle overthrew the man ; and Louis Philippe was overthrown, with his double generation of princes, his sons and his grandsons.

What say the Scriptures? "The sins of the fathers shall be visited upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation."

This made such a noise in France that for some time people would bother themselves neither with "The Mysteries of Paris," with "The General Confession," with "Mauprat," with "Monte Cristo," with "Le Chevalier de Maison Rouge," nor with "The Women's War," — nor even (we must acknowledge it) with their authors.

No, they listened to Lamartine, to Ledru Rollin, to Cavaignac, and Prince Napoleon.

At the end of the turmoil, however, a little calm supervening, it was perceived that these gentlemen were far less entertaining than Eugene Sue, than Frederic Soulié, than Madame George Sand, and even the man who humbly puts himself last of all ; and it was seen that their political prose, except that of Lamartine (to every prince all honor !) was not worth so much as that of "The Mysteries of Paris," of "The General Confession," of "Mauprat," of "Monte Cristo," of "Le Chevalier de Maison Rouge," and of "The Women's War."

As he could not do much in politics, Lamartine, the Wisdom of the Nation, was invited to write essays ; and the other gentlemen, myself included, to confine ourselves to light literature.

This we hastened at once to do, having no need of any invitation thereto.

Straightway the novels reappeared, and the editorial leaders again disappeared ; although the same orators who declaimed before the Revolution, have continued to repeat, without an echo, the same speeches after the Revolution, and will go on talking forever.

Among these speech-makers was one who never talked, — at least, rarely.

Nevertheless he was well known, and the world saluted him when he passed along, wearing his decorative ribbon as a Delegate.

One day he mounted the tribune. Oh Lord, I wish I could tell you his name, but I have forgotten it.

He ascended the rostrum. Well, you must know one thing, that the Chamber was in very bad humor that day.

Paris had elected, as its Representative, one of those men who write feuilletons. The name of that man I do not forget ; he was called Eugene Sue.

The Chamber was in a bad humor when it was reported that Eugene Sue had been elected. There were already on its benches four or five literary blots, who were sufficiently insupportable, — Lamartine, Hugo, Felix Pyat, Quinet, Esquiros.

This Deputy, whose name I do not recall, mounted the tribune, profiting adroitly by the bad humor of the Chamber. Everybody called out *Hush*. Everybody listened.

He said that in novels were to be found the reasons why Ravailac assassinated Henry Fourth, why Louis

Thirteenth assassinated Maréchal d'Ancre, why Louis Fourteenth assassinated Fouquet, why Damiens tried to assassinate Louis Fifteenth, why Louvel assassinated the Duc de Berry, why Fieschi assaulted Louis Philippe, and finally why Praslin assassinated his wife.

He added that all the adulteries committed, all the peculations perpetrated, all the thefts accomplished, were caused by the feuilleton; that its novels must either be suppressed or taxed; that when this was done the world would call a halt, and instead of continuing its road towards the abyss, would reascend to the Golden Age, — which it could not fail to reach at a very early day, provided the country could go backward as fast as it had come forward.

General Foy said one day : “There is an echo in France, whenever the words *honor* and *country* are spoken.”

Yes, it is true that in General Foy's time there was such an echo. We have heard it, — we who are now speaking, — and we are glad we did hear it.

“Where is that echo?” somebody asks.

Which echo?

“The echo of General Foy.”

It is with the old moons of the poet Villon. Perhaps some day we shall find it again. Let us hope so.

There was also on a certain day, — not the time of General Foy, — another echo heard in the tribune. It was a strange echo, which said : “This is a time when we blast what Europe admires, — when we sell, as dearly as possible, what any other government would give away for nothing, if it had the good fortune to possess it, — Genius.”

It must be said that this poor Echo did not speak on its own account; it did but repeat the words of the orator.

The Chamber, with few exceptions, was but the echo of that echo.

Alas, for thirty-five or forty years this has been the rôle of every majority. In legislatures, as in the theatre, there are traditions almost fatal.

The Chamber, being advised that all thefts which occurred, all peculations which took place, all adulteries which were committed, were to lie at the door of the *Feuilleton Romance*; that if Praslin killed his wife, if Fieschi assaulted Louis Philippe, if Louvel killed the Duc de Berry, if Napoleon killed the Duc d'Enghien, if Damiens tried to kill Louis Fifteenth, if Louis Fourteenth killed Fouquet, if Louis Thirteenth killed Maréchal d'Ancre, and finally, if Ravaillac killed Henry Fourth, — all these crimes were evidently owing to the serial novel, even before it was created.

The majority were in favor of a stamp-act.

Perhaps the reader has not thought about such a tax, and may ask how a stamp, of only a centime (a fifth of a sou, or the hundredth part of a franc) on each sheet, should kill the *feuilleton*.

Dear reader, a centime on each *feuilleton*, — do you know how much it amounts to, if your journal prints forty thousand copies? Four hundred francs an issue for each *feuilleton*; that is, twice as much as is paid to the author, whether his name is Eugene Sue, Lamartine, Méry, George Sand, or Dumas.

It is three or four times as much as is received when the author is less in vogue than those whose names we have cited, however honorable the name of that excellent author may be.

Now tell me: Is it highly moral for a government to place on merchandise an impost-duty four times the value of the merchandise itself? Above all, is this honorable

when the merchandise is such that its ownership may be contested, — namely, Intellect ?

The result is that not a journal is rich enough to buy serial *romances*. It also follows from this, that all the journals publish feuilleton *histories*.

Dear reader, what do you say to the serial history in “The Constitutionnel” ?

Ahem !

Yes ; that’s it exactly !

That is what politicians desire, in order that these literary fellows shall no longer be talked about ; but nobody imagines that this will incite the feuilleton to a healthy moral course.

For instance : it was proposed to me, — to me who wrote “Monte Cristo,” “The Musketeers,” “Queen Margot,” — it was proposed to me to make a *History of the Palace Royal*.

This species of history would be doubly interesting, — on the one side a *History of Gaming-houses*, and on the other a *History of Brothels*.

It was also proposed to me, — to me, a distinctively religious man, — to write a *History of Papal Crimes*.

It was proposed to me, — well, I dare not tell you all that was proposed to me.

This would be nothing, however, if people were only content with asking me to *work* ; but they also propose to me to *work no more*.

Accordingly, this very morning, I received this letter from Émile de Girardin.

MY DEAR FRIEND : I wish “Ange Pitou” to be in one half-volume instead of six volumes, — in ten chapters instead of a hundred.

Arrange it to suit yourself ; but cut it, unless you wish *me* to curtail it for you.

I understood perfectly well, *parbleu* !

Girardin had my Memoirs in his old drawers. He preferred publishing my Memoirs, which pay no stamp-tax, rather than "Ange Pitou," which is heavily taxed. He would therefore suppress six volumes of fiction in order to publish twenty volumes of Memoirs.

And this, dear and beloved reader, is why the word *finis* was placed long before the *finish*, — why Ange Pitou was strangled after the fashion of Paul the First, not by the neck, but around the middle of his body.

But you know by "The Musketeers," which you twice believed dead, but which became twice resuscitated, that my heroes are not put out of the way as easily as emperors.

Well, it is with Pitou as it was with these same Musketeers.

Pitou — who was not dead the least in the world, but had only disappeared — is going to reappear ; and on my part I beseech you, in this season of troubles and revolutions, which kindle so many torches and extinguish so many candles, not to mistake my heroes for dead, unless you receive a certificate from me, signed by my own hand.

And hardly then — !

LA COMTESSE DE CHARNY.



CHAPTER I.

THE TAVERN AT SEVRES BRIDGE.

IF the reader will refer for one instant to our romance called "Ange Pitou," and cast his eyes for an instant on the chapter entitled The Night of the Fifth and Sixth of October, he will recall certain facts which it is important he should have in mind when commencing the present book, which opens with the morning of the sixth of the same month.

By quoting a few important lines from that chapter we shall give, in as few words as possible, a summary of the facts which necessarily precede the resumption of our recital.

These lines are as follows :

At three o'clock all was tranquil at Versailles. The Assembly, reassured by the report of its officers, had retired. It was believed that this tranquillity would not be troubled. This belief was ill-founded.

In almost all popular movements which prepare the way for great revolutions, there is a period of stagnation, during which it seems as if everything was finished, and the world might sleep in peace. These appearances are deceptive.

Behind the men who make the first movements there are others who wait till the first movements are over, when those who have taken the first steps rest themselves, either from fatigue or satisfaction, not wishing, either in one case or the other, to take a step farther.

Then it is that these unknown men take their turn, — these mysterious agents of fatal passions, — gliding through the populace, taking up the cause where it has been abandoned, pushing it to the utmost limits, and appalling, in the outburst, those who have opened the way, and who, believing the end attained, the task accomplished, have retreated to their couches in the very middle of the race.

In the book from which we borrow the few lines above cited we have named three of these men.

May we now be permitted to introduce into our scene, — that is to say, at the entrance of the tavern at Sevres Bridge — a personage who, though not so named in these narratives, none the less played an important rôle on that terrible night.

This was a man from forty-five to forty-eight years of age, dressed like a workman; that is to say, he wore velvet breeches, guarded with leathern patches about the pockets, like the aprons worn by iron-workers and locksmiths. He wore gray hose, and shoes with copper buckles; and on his head was a woollen cap, resembling a lancer's bonnet cut in halves. A forest of gray hair escaped from beneath this cap, mingled with his enormous eyebrows, and shaded his large eyes, lively and intelligent, whose glances were so rapid, and whose tints so changeable, that it was difficult to determine whether the eyes were green or gray, blue or black. The rest of his face included a nose rather beyond the medium size, large lips, white teeth, and a complexion browned by the sun.

Without being large this man was admirably formed. He had lithe limbs and a small foot ; and one might have seen that he had a hand small and delicate, if that hand had lacked the bronze tint common to workers in iron. Looking from the hand to the elbow, and from the elbow, up the arm, to the point where the roll of the shirt permitted a view of his vigorously outlined muscle, one could not help noting, despite the strength of muscle, that the skin which covered it was fine, soft, almost aristocratic.

This man, standing at the door of the inn of Sevres Bridge, had in his hand a gun with two barrels, and richly ornamented with gold, on the barrel whereof might be read the name of Leclère, an armorer then beginning to be fashionable among the aristocracy of Parisian hunters.

Perchance somebody might ask how so beautiful a weapon found itself in the hands of a simple workman. To this we should respond, that in days of riot — and we have seen a few such days — it is not always in the whitest hands that the finest weapons are found.

This man had come from Versailles hardly an hour before ; and he knew perfectly well what had happened there, for to the questions put to him by the landlord, in serving a bottle of wine, before the stranger had even touched it, the Unknown responded that the Queen was coming with the King and the Dauphin ; that they started at midday, — hardly later ; that they had finally decided to reside at the Palace of the Tuileries ; that in future Paris would probably not want for bread, inasmuch as it would have the Baker, the Bakeress, and the Baker's Boy, as Louis the Sixteenth, Marie Antoinette, and their son were commonly called ; and that he, the Unknown, was waiting to see the procession.

This last assertion might be true; yet it was easy to see that his attention was turned more anxiously upon the route towards Paris than upon the route towards Versailles; which made it reasonable to believe that he did not feel himself obliged to render a strict account of his intentions to the worthy innkeeper, who had permitted himself to ask so many questions.

At the end of some moments the stranger's attention appeared to be rewarded. A man, clad almost exactly like himself, and seemingly engaged in a similar vocation, was outlined on the hill which bounded the horizon in that direction.

This man walked with a weary step, like a traveller who has already taken a long journey. As he approached, his characteristics and his age were distinguishable. His age seemed to be about that of the Unknown; that is, one might boldly affirm, as people say, that he was on the shady side of forty. As to his traits, they were those of a man with base inclinations and vulgar instincts.

The eye of the Unknown fixed itself curiously and with a strange expression upon the new-comer, as if at a glance he would measure all that was impure and bad in the man's heart.

When the mechanic, coming by the Paris road, was not more than fifty steps from the personage who waited at the door, the latter re-entered the tavern, and poured the first wine from the bottle into one of the two glasses on the table. Returning to the door he said, with the glass lifted in his hand: "Ah, comrade, the weather is cold, the way is long. Shall we not take a glass of wine to sustain and warm us?"

The mechanic from Paris looked about him, to see if it was indeed to him the invitation was addressed.

"Is it to me you speak?" he demanded.

"To whom then, so please you, seeing that you are alone?"

"And you offer me a glass of wine?"

"Why not?"

"Ah!"

"Are we not of the same trade, or nearly so?"

For a second time the workman looked at the Unknown. "All the world," said he, "may be of the same trade; but it is important to know if one is a comrade in that trade, or a master."

"Oh well, that we can determine while having a glass of wine and a chat."

"Be it so!" said the workman, making his way towards the doorway of the tavern.

The Unknown pointed to the table and offered him a glass. The workman took the glass, and regarded the wine with a certain air of suspicion; but this disappeared when the Unknown poured a second glass of the liquid alongside of the first.

"Well," asked the workman, "is somebody too stuck-up to drink with one whom he invites?"

"No, by my faith. To the Nation!"

The gray eyes of the mechanic sought for a moment those of him from whom the toast emanated. Then he repeated: "Parbleu, you say well: To the Nation!" and he swallowed the contents of the glass at a gulp. After that he wiped his lips with his sleeve. "Ah ha," he added, "it is burgundy."

"And of good age, hey? This brand has been recommended to me. On my way I tried it, and am not sorry for it. But sit down, comrade. There is still some left in the bottle; and when there is no more in that bottle, there are more bottles in the cellar."

"Well," said the workman, "what are you doing here?"

"Well, you see I come from Versailles, and I await the procession, to accompany it to Paris."

"What procession?"

"Why, that of the King, the Queen, and the Dauphin, who return to Paris, in company with the market-women and two hundred members of the Assembly, and under the protection of the National Guard and of our Lafayette."

"He has then decided to go to Paris, this Citizen?"

"It was necessary."

"I had no doubt of it at three o'clock this morning, when I started for Paris."

"Ah! You started in the night, at three o'clock! and you quitted Versailles like that, without any curiosity to know what was happening?"

"In truth I had some desire to know what would become of the Citizen, — the more so because, without boasting, I have some acquaintance with him; but, you know, business before everything else! When a man has a wife and children he must care for them, especially if there is no longer the Royal Forge."

The Unknown allowed these two allusions to pass unnoticed; but presently he said: "It was then some pressing job which took you to Paris?"

"Faith, yes, so it seemed, — and likely to pay well," added the workman, jingling some crowns in his pocket as he spoke; "although they had me paid by a servant, which was not polite, and even by a German servant, who could not converse the least little bit."

"And *you* do not dislike to gossip?"

"Dame! When we do not speak ill of others it is harmless."

"And also when we *do*, — is it not so?"

The two men began to laugh, the Unknown showing his white teeth, the other displaying his broken teeth.

"Well then," replied the Unknown, — like a man who indeed advances step by step, but whom nothing will prevent from advancing, "you have been employed in pressing business, and well paid?"

"Yes."

"Because the work was difficult, no doubt?"

"Difficult, yes!"

"A secret lock, hey?"

"An invisible door! Imagine a house within a house. Some one must be anxious to hide himself, — is it not so? Well, it *is* so and it is *not* so. You ring. The servant opens the door. 'Monsieur?' — 'He is not in.' — 'Oh yes, he is!' — 'Very well! Search!' You search. Good evening! I defy you to find Monsieur. A door of iron, do you understand, boxed nicely into a moulding. You might mistake it all for old oak, since it is impossible to distinguish the wood from the iron."

"Yes, but if you rap on it?"

"Bah! A layer of wood on the iron, thin as a thread, but thick enough to make the sound the same. *Tac-tac-tac!* You see, the thing is done, if I am not mistaken."

"And where the devil did you do all this?"

"Ah, that's it!"

"That's what you don't wish to tell?"

"That is what I *can't* tell, for the good reason that I do not know."

"Your eyes were bandaged?"

"Certainly! I was met by a carriage at the barrier. Somebody said to me: 'Are you so and so?' I said, 'Yes.' — 'Good, it is you for whom we wait! Enter!' — 'It is necessary for me to ride?' — 'Yes.' I entered, and

they bandaged my eyes. The carriage rolled along for about half an hour, and then a door was opened, a wide door. I blundered over the first stone of a stairway. I mounted ten steps. I entered a vestibule. There I found a German servant, who said to the others: 'Dat is vell. Now go you away. Ve have no more need of you.' The others went away. My bandage was taken off, and I was shown what I had to do. I put myself to the task in earnest. In an hour it was done. They paid me in beautiful gold louis. Then my eyes were again bandaged. I was replaced in the same carriage, and reconducted to the very place where I had entered the carriage. They wished me a happy journey, — and here I am!"

"Without having seen anything, even out of the corner of your eye? The devil! A bandage is not so well secured that one may not peep to the right or left."

"Aye, aye!"

"Well then, well then, tell what you saw!" said the stranger briskly.

"Here you are then! When I made that false step against the lower step of the vestibule, I profited by the accident to make a gesture. In making this gesture I disarranged the bandage a little."

"And in disarranging the bandage?" said the Unknown, with responsive vivacity.

"I saw a row of trees at my left, which led me to believe the mansion was on the Boulevards; but that's all."

"That's all?"

"On my word of honor!"

"That does n't reveal much."

"Seeing that the Boulevards are long, and that there is more than one house, with a big door and an archway, between the Café Saint-Honoré and the Bastille!"

“Perchance you would recognize the house again?”

The locksmith reflected an instant. “No, on my faith, no,” said he. “I am not capable of it.”

The Unknown, although his astute countenance did not habitually betray what he wished to conceal, looked well satisfied with this assurance.

“Ah yes; but,” said he, suddenly taking up a new order of ideas, “are there not enough locksmiths in Paris, that these gentry, who wish for secret doors, should send to Versailles for a locksmith?”

At the same time he poured out a full glass for his companion, striking the table with the empty bottle, in order that the master of the establishment should bring a fresh flask.

CHAPTER II.

MASTER GAMAIN.

THE locksmith raised his glass to a level with his eye, and regarded the wine complacently. Then, tasting it with satisfaction, he said: "There are certainly locksmiths in Paris."

He sipped a few drops more. "There are even masters in the art there."

He drank again.

"That is what I said!"

"Yes, but there are masters *and* masters."

"Ah ha!" laughed the Unknown; "I see! You are like Saint Eloi, not only a master, but a master over masters."

"And master over all. You are in the same condition?"

"Nearly so."

"What are you?"

"I am a gunsmith."

"Have you a sample of your work?"

"You see this gun."

The locksmith took the gun from the hands of the Unknown, examined it with attention, played with the springs, with a motion of his head approved the click of the hammers. Then, reading the name on the barrel and on the plate, he said: "Leclère? Impossible, my friend. Leclère is not over twenty-eight years, and we two are both marching towards the fifties, — if this may be spoken without being disagreeable to you."

"That is true," said the other. "I am not Leclère ; but it's all the same."

"How all the same ?"

"Without a doubt, because I am his master."

"That's good !" cried the locksmith laughing. "It is as if I should say : 'I am not the King, but it's all the same.'"

"How is that the same thing ?" asked the Unknown.

"Easily so, because I am *his* master," said the locksmith.

"Oh ho !" laughed the Unknown, rising, and caricaturing the military salute ; "then it is to M. Gamain I have the honor of speaking ?"

"To himself in person, and ready to serve you if I can," said the locksmith, enchanted with the effect his name had produced.

"The devil !" said the Unknown ; "I did not know that I had the honor of speaking to a man of so much consequence."

"Eh !"

"To a man of such consequence," repeated the Unknown.

"So *consequential*, you mean."

"Well, yes," replied the Unknown, laughing ; "but, you know, a poor gunsmith does not talk French like a master,—and *such* a master, master of the King of France."

Then, resuming the conversation in a different tone, he said : "Say, it can not be very amusing to be the King's master ?"

"Why not ?"

"Why indeed ; when it must take an eternity of bother to say Good-day or Good-evening properly."

"Oh no !"

"When it is necessary to say 'Your Majesty, take the key in the left hand. — Sire, take this file in the right hand,'"

"Really that is the charm about *him*, — because he is a good fellow at bottom, you see. Any day at the forge, when he had his apron on, and the sleeves of his shirt were turned up, one would never have taken him for the Eldest Son of Saint Louis, as they call him, — the King of a great country like this."

"Indeed you are right. It is extraordinary that a king should resemble any other man."

"Yes, is n't it? Long ago those who came near him found that out."

"Oh, that was nothing, if he had near him only those whom he knew," said the Unknown, laughing with a strange laugh; "but now there are those outside who begin to perceive the same thing."

Gamain regarded his interlocutor with some astonishment; but the latter, who had almost forgotten his rôle, as one word followed another, did not give him time to weigh the value of the sentence just uttered. Turning the conversation he said: "Yes, you are right; I think it humiliating for one man to address another man, like himself, as your Majesty and Sire."

"But it was not needful to call him Sire and Majesty. Once at the forge he required no more of that. I called him Bourgeois, and he called me Gamain. Only I did not *thee-and-thou* him, as he did me."

"Yes! but when the hour came for breakfast or dinner, Gamain was sent to dine with the attendants, with lackeys!"

"Not so, oh no! *He* never did that. On the contrary, he had a table, already spread, brought into the shop; and often, especially at breakfast, he sat at the

table with me, and said : 'Bah, I will not go to breakfast with the Queen, for then I shall have to wash my hands.'"

"I don't understand !"

"You don't understand that when the King came to work with me, to handle iron, pardieu, he had hands like the rest of us. What then ? That does not prevent us from being honest folks ; although the Queen would say to him, with her stuck-up air : 'Fie, Sire, you have soiled hands !' as if one could have clean hands when he was working at the forge."

"Don't talk to me any more about it," said the Unknown, "it makes me weep !"

"You see, in a word, he only enjoyed himself at the forge, that man, or in his Geographical Cabinet, with me or with his librarian ; but I believe it was myself whom he most loved."

"Nevertheless, it is not amusing to be the teacher of a bad pupil."

"Of a bad pupil ?" cried Gamain. "Oh no ! That is not so. He is indeed unhappy at having come into the world a king, and at being obliged to occupy himself with such foolish things as now claim him, instead of making progress in his art. He will never make but a poor king ; he is too honest ; but he would make an excellent locksmith. There is one man there whom I hate, for the time he made *him* waste. That was Necker. How much time he made him lose ! Oh Lord, how much time he made him lose."

"With his accounts, is it not so ?"

"Yes, with his accounts in paper, — his accounts in the air, as one might say."

"Well, my friend, tell us —"

"What ?"

"That must have been a famous job for you, with a pupil of such calibre."

"Indeed, no ! Truly, there's where you're mistaken ; for here I vow to you, — although people believe me rich as Cræsus, on account of what I've done for your Louis Sixteenth, your Father of his Country, your Restorer of the French Nation, — in good truth I'm as poor as Job."

"You are poor ? But his money, what did he do with it, then ?"

"Good ! He gave half of it to the poor, and the other half to the rich, of the sort who never have a sou. The Coignys, the Vaudreuils, the Polignacs nibbled at him, poor dear fellow ! One day he wished to reduce the salary of Monsieur de Coigny. Coigny came to see him at the door of the forge. After five minutes' absence the King returned very pale, saying : 'My faith, I thought he would beat me !' — 'And his salary, Sire ?' I demanded. 'I have let that alone,' he responded, — 'impossible to do otherwise.' Another day he wished to speak to the Queen about the lay-out of Madame de Polignac, a lay-out of three hundred thousand francs, you know."

"Very pretty !"

"Very well ! but that was not enough. The Queen made him give *five* hundred thousand ! So you see, these Polignacs, who only ten years ago had not a sou, when they come to quit France will have millions. If they only had talent ; but give all those blades an anvil and a hammer, and they are not capable of forging a horse-shoe. Give them vise and file, and they are not capable of making the screw of a lock ; but on the other hand, being fine talkers and chevaliers, as people say, they have pushed the King ahead, and to-day leave him to get on as he can, with Messieurs Bailly, Lafayette,

and Mirabeau; while for me, — *me*, who have always given him such good counsel, if he had only listened to it, — he has only allowed fifteen hundred livres salary, — me his master, me his friend, — *me*, who first put the file into his hand.”

“Yes, but when you labor with him, there is always a bonus.”

“You think that I still work with him? In the first place that would compromise me. Since the taking of the Bastille I have not set foot inside the palace. Once or twice I have encountered him. The first time all the world was in the street, and he contented himself with a bow. The second time was on the road to Satory. We were alone, and he stopped his carriage. ‘Ah, my poor Gamain, good-morning,’ he said, with a sigh. — ‘Well, things do not go as you wish? but this will teach you,’ I began. — ‘And thy wife, thy children,’ he interrupted, ‘they are all well?’ — ‘Perfectly! Infernal appetites, that’s all.’ — ‘Hold,’ said the King. ‘Carry them this gift from me;’ and he ransacked his pockets and scraped together nine louis. ‘It is all I have about me, my poor Gamain,’ he said, ‘and I am ashamed to make such a sorry present.’ And indeed, as you can understand, there *was* something shameful about it! A king who has only nine louis in his pocket, a king who makes his comrade, his friend, a gift of nine louis! So —”

“So you refused?”

“No! I said: ‘It is right to take what comes, for he may meet another less particular, who will accept.’ But it’s all the same. He may rest in peace! I shall not take another step towards the palace, though he sends for me again and again.”

“What a grateful heart!” murmured the Unknown.

"You say — ?"

"I say, Master Gamain, that it is touching to see devotion like yours survive such ill fortune. A final glass of wine, to the health of your scholar."

"Ah, my faith! He is n't worth it. No matter, here's to his health, all the same."

He drank and then continued: "And when I think that he had in his cellars more than ten thousand bottles, of which the very poorest is worth ten times more than this, and that he never said to his footman: 'Here you, get a basket of wine, and carry it to the house of my friend Gamain!' Oh yes! He preferred having it drunk by his bodyguards, by his Swiss soldiers, and by the regiment from Flanders. There is success for you!"

"What would you have?" said the Unknown, emptying his glass of the small drops. "Kings are always so, — ingrates! But hush! We are not alone."

In truth three persons entered the tavern, two men of the people, and one fishwoman, and seated themselves at the table opposite the one where the Unknown had just finished his second bottle with Master Gamain.

The locksmith cast his eyes towards them, and examined them with a solicitude which made the Unknown smile.

Indeed these three new personages seemed worthy of some attention.

Of the two men, one was all body, the other all legs. As for the woman, it was difficult to know what she was.

The man who was all body resembled a dwarf, and hardly attained a height of five feet. Perhaps he lost an inch or two of height on account of the bend of his knees, which touched each other inside when he was standing, despite his straddling feet. His face, instead

of relieving this deformity, seemed to make it more noticeable. His hair, gray and dirty, was plastered over a low forehead. His eyebrows, badly shaped, seemed to have grown by chance. His eyes were habitually glassy, stagnant, and without light, like those of a toad; yet in moments of irritation they gave forth a sparkle like that which radiates from the contracted eyeball of a furious viper. His nose was flat, deviating from the straight line, and therefore made more self-assertive the prominent knobs of his cheeks. Finally, to complete this hideous combination, his twisted mouth revealed, through his jaundiced lips, only a few tusks, shaky and black.

This man, even at the first glance, seemed to have veins filled with gall instead of blood.

The second, the opposite of the first, whose legs were short and crooked, seemed like a heron perched on a pair of stilts. His resemblance to the bird with which we have compared him was even greater, because, being humpbacked, his head was completely lost between his shoulders, and could only be distinguished by two eyes, which seemed like spots of blood, and by a nose long and pointed, like a beak. He was still more like the heron in this, that you might fancy, at first glance, that he had the power of stretching his neck like a spring, and of pecking out the eyes, even at a distance, of any individual to whom he might wish to render this malicious service. Moreover, his arms seemed endowed with the elasticity really denied to his neck. Seated as he was, he had only to elongate his finger, without inclining his body in the least, in order to pick up a handkerchief he had let fall, after wiping his forehead, moist with sweat and rain.

The third man or woman, whichever you please, was a being amphibious, of which one could recognize the

species, though it was difficult to distinguish the sex. It was a man or a woman of thirty or thirty-four years old, wearing an elegant fishwife's costume, with chains of gold and buckles of silver, with lace headdress and kerchief. The features, so far as they were distinguishable through the layer of rouge and powder which covered them, and through the patches, of all shapes, which starred this surface of red and white, were partly obliterated, as one sees them in debased races. Sometimes when you looked that way, and the aspect conveyed the doubt we have already expressed, you waited with impatience for the mouth to open and pronounce a few words, in the hope that the sound of the voice would give to the doubtful physique a character which would render it possible to identify its sex. But it was not so. The voice, which seemed a treble, left the inquisitive observer plunged more profoundly in the doubt awakened by the body. The ear did not help the eye, the hearing did not complement the sight.

The socks and shoes of the two men, as well as the shoes of the woman, indicated that the wearers had been tramping a long time in the streets.

"It is astonishing," said Gamain, "but it seems to me that I know that woman."

"May-be ; but the moment when those three people are together, my dear Monsieur Gamain," said the Unknown, taking his gun and drawing his cap over his ear, "that is the moment when they have something to do ; and when they have something to do, it is well to leave them alone."

"You know them, then ?" demanded Gamain.

"Yes, by sight," responded the Unknown. "And you?"

"Me ? I repeat, that I believe I have seen the *woman* somewhere."

"At Court, mayhap?" queried the Unknown.

"Oh yes, surely! A fishwoman!"

"They have been there often of late."

"If you recognize them, name the two men to me. That will aid me to recognize the woman more positively."

"The two men?"

"Yes."

"Which shall I name first?"

"Him of the bandy-legs."

"Jean Paul Marat."

"Ah ha!"

"Next?"

"The hunchback."

"Prosper Verrières."

"Oh ho!"

"Well, does that help to put you on the track of the fishwife?"

"Faith, no!"

"Think!"

"I give my memory to the dogs!"

"Well, well, — the fishwife?"

"Hold on! No, no, no —"

"Have you thought?"

"It is — impossible!"

"Yes, it does seem impossible, at first thought."

"It is —?"

"I see very well that you will never name him, and so I must do so. The fishwife is the Duc d'Aiguillon."

At the utterance of this name the fishwife started and turned herself about, and so did the two men.

All three then made a movement to arise, as we do before a chief for whom we wish to show marked deference; but the Unknown placed his finger on his lips and passed out.

Gamain followed him, believing himself in a dream.

At the entrance they were hustled by an individual apparently in flight, pursued by people who cried out :
"The Queen's hairdresser, the Queen's hairdresser !"

Among the people running and screaming there were two who each bore a bloody head at the end of a spear.

These were the heads of two unfortunate guardsmen, Varicourt and Deschuttes.

These heads, as we have said, formed part of the mob running after the unlucky fellow who jostled Gamain.

"Hold on, Monsieur Leonard !" he said to him.

"Silence ! Don't call me by name !" cried the hairdresser, rushing into the tavern.

"What will they do with him ?" demanded the locksmith of the Unknown.

"Who knows ?" responded the latter. "Perhaps they wish him to frizz the hair of those poor devils. People have singular ideas in revolutionary times ;" and then he lost himself in the crowd, leaving Gamain, from whom he had doubtless extracted all that he needed, to regain, as he intended, the workshop at Versailles.

CHAPTER III.

CAGLIOSTRO.

It was the easier for the Unknown to lose himself in that crowd, because the crowd was numerous. This was the advance guard of the escort of the King, the Queen, and the Dauphin. They had left Versailles, as the King had appointed, at about an hour after noon.

The Queen, the Dauphin, the Princess Royal, the Comte de Provence, Madame Elizabeth, and Andrée¹ were in the King's coach.

A hundred carriages had received the members of the National Assembly, who had declared themselves inseparable from the King.

The Comte de Charny and Billot remained at Versailles, to render the last services to the Baron George de Charny, — killed, as we have before related, in that terrible night of the Fifth and Sixth of October, — and also to see that the corpse was not mutilated, as the bodies of the guardsmen Varicourt and Deshottes had been.

This advance guard, whereof we have spoken, — and which set out from Versailles two hours before the King, and was now in advance of him by about a quarter-hour, — rallied as it were about the two heads of the guards-

¹ Speaking always with the conviction, or at least the hope, that our readers of to-day were our readers of yesterday, and are consequently familiar with these personages, we believe it necessary to remind them only of one fact, that Mademoiselle Andrée de Taverney is no other than the Comtesse de Charny, the sister of Philippe, and daughter of the Baron de Taverney-Maison-Rouge.

men, which served them for an ensign. When the heads came to a standstill at the Sevres Bridge Tavern the advance guard stopped also, and at the same time.

This advance guard was composed of miserable ragamuffins, half drunk, the scum which floats to the surface in every flood, whether a flood of water or of lava.

Suddenly there was a great tumult in the crowd. They had caught sight of the bayonets of the National Guard and the white horse of Lafayette, who preceded the King's carriage.

Lafayette liked popular assemblies very much, — that is, among the people of Paris, of whom he was the idol, among whom he literally reigned; but he did not love the populace. Paris, like Rome, had its *plebs* and its *plebecula*, the commonalty and the rabble.

Above all he disliked this sort of execution, which the populace administered of their own accord. We have seen that he did all he could to save Flesselles, Foulon, and Berthier de Sauvigny.

It was to hide their trophies, and at the same time to preserve the bloody ensigns which confirmed their victory, that this advance guard had marched so far ahead; and now, re-enforced by the triumvirate, whom they had the luck to encounter in the tavern, these standard-bearers found a means of eluding Lafayette. They refused to part with their companions; and decided, his Majesty having declared he would not be separated from his faithful guards, that they should attend his Majesty as his escort. Consequently the advance guard, having gathered its forces, again took up its march.

The mob rushed along the great road from Versailles to Paris, like a demoralized stream, which, after a storm, carries away, in its black and foul torrent, the inmates of a palace, which it has encountered and overturned in its

violence — this mob, we say, had on each side of the route a sort of eddy, formed by the residents of the surrounding villages, who ran to see what was going on. Among those who ran thither some, and this was the smallest number, mingled with the crowd as part of the King's escort, adding their clamors and shouts to all the other shouts and cries ; but the greater number remained by the roadside, silent and unmoved.

Are we to suppose from this that they were in sympathy with the King and Queen ? No ; for apart from those who belonged to the upper crust of society, everybody, even the middle classes, suffered more or less from that frightful famine which was spreading itself over France. Though they did not insult the King, Queen, and Dauphin, they held their peace ; and the silence of a crowd is perhaps worse than insult.

On the other hand, as a compensation, this crowd shouted with all their lungs : "Long live Lafayette !" who from time to time doffed his hat with his left hand, and saluted with the sword in his right, — and "Long live Mirabeau !" — as now and then he thrust his head through the door of the coach, into which he was crowded as the sixth inmate, in order to inhale from the outside the full amount of fresh air needful for his large lungs.

Thus the unhappy Louis the Sixteenth, towards whom all were mute, heard them applaud, in his very presence, the very thing he had lost, Popularity, and what he had always lacked, Genius.

Gilbert, as if making the trip alone with the King, marched along with the rest of the crowd, at the right hand door of the royal coach, — that is, at the side of the Queen.

Marie Antoinette, who had never been able to compre-

hend this species of stoicism in Gilbert, in whom American coolness was united with a novel gruffness, regarded with astonishment this man, who — without love and without devotion towards the royal family, fulfilling towards them simply what he considered his duty — was yet ready to do for them all that could have been done by devotion and love. Moreover he was ready to die for them, and the greatest love and loyalty could go no farther.

On both sides of the carriage of the King and Queen, beyond this line of footmen, as it were, — who had taken possession of this location, part of them from curiosity, others that they might be able to succor the august travellers in case of need, and a very few with evil intentions, — on the sides of the road, floundering in mire six inches deep, walked the dames and porters of the marketplace; and amidst this motley stream of bouquets and ribbons, which seemed to increase from time to time, rolled one wave more compact than the rest.

This wave was a gun-carriage, or a powder-cart, filled with women singing and yelling at the tops of their voices. When they sang, it was the familiar old verse :

The Baker's wife, she hath some crowns, .
Which did not cost her dear.

When they spoke, it was a new formula of hope : “ We shall no longer lack bread, since we bring back the Baker, the Baker's Wife, and the Baker's Boy.”

The Queen seemed to hear all this, without understanding it. She held, seated in her lap, the little Dauphin, who regarded the crowd with that scared expression with which royal children must look upon a mob in revolutionary times, as we have seen the King of Rome, the Duc de Bordeaux, and the Comte de Paris look upon it ;

only the rabble in our day is more disdainful and more magnanimous, because it is stronger, and knows that it can afford to be gracious.

The King, on his part, beheld all this with a dull and weary look. He had scarcely slept during the night before. He had eaten little breakfast. There had been no time to have his hair dressed and powdered. His beard was long. His linen was rumped. All these things were infinitely to his disadvantage. Alas! The poor King was not the man for difficult emergencies. Indeed, before all such emergencies he bowed his head. On one day only he raised it, — on the scaffold, at the very moment when it fell.

Madame Elizabeth was the angel of sweetness and resignation whom God had placed near these two condemned creatures, to console the King, in the Temple, in the absence of the Queen, to console the Queen, in the Conciergerie, for the death of the King.

The Comte de Provence, then as always, had a sidelong and false expression. He well knew that, for a time at least, he ran no danger. At that particular moment he was the popular one of the family. Why? Nobody knows. Perhaps because he remained in France when his brother, the Comte d'Artois, went away. But if the King had been able to read the bottom of the Count's heart, it remains very doubtful if what he read there would have left undisturbed his avowed gratitude for what he interpreted as devotion.

Andrée seemed like marble. She had slept no better than the Queen, eaten no better than the King; but these exigencies of life seemed scarcely to belong to her exceptional nature. She had no time to care for her hair or change her clothes; and yet not a hair of her head was disarranged, and not a fold of her robe indicated any

unaccustomed disturbance. Like a statue the waves rolled about her, without apparently attracting even her attention, and seemed to make her more smooth and white. It was evident that this woman had, in the depths of head or heart, a thought unique and luminous, known to herself alone, to which her soul gravitated, as the magnetic needle points to the polar star. A sort of shadow among the living, only one thing showed that she was alive,—the involuntary light which flashed in her glance every time her eye encountered the eye of Gilbert.

A hundred paces or so before they arrived at the little tavern of which we have spoken, the procession made a halt. The cries redoubled all along the line.

The Queen leaned slightly out of the window, and this movement, which resembled a salutation, occasioned a prolonged murmur in the crowd.

"Monsieur Gilbert," she said.

This one word, by the precise intonation with which it was pronounced, indicated that Gilbert was always at the orders of the Queen.

"Monsieur Gilbert," she repeated, "what do my people sing, what do they say?"

One could see, by the very form of this phrase, that the Queen had premeditated it, and that she had chewed it between her teeth, doubtless for a long time, before ejaculating it through the window, into the face of that rabble.

Gilbert uttered a sigh which signified, "Always the same!"

Then he said, with a profound expression of melancholy: "Alas, Madame, the people, whom you call *my people*, have been so heretofore, and it is hardly twenty years since Monsieur de Brissac—a charming courtier, for whom I now look in vain—showed you, from the

balcony of the Hôtel de Ville, to these same people, crying : 'Long live the Princess !' and said to you : 'Madame, you have there two hundred thousand lovers.' "

The Queen bit her lips, for it was impossible to charge this man with rudeness in reply or with want of respect.

"Yes, that is true," said the Queen, "and that proves how changeable the people are."

This time Gilbert bowed, but did not answer.

"I asked you a question, Monsieur Gilbert," said the Queen, with that persistence which she always evinced, even about things which must of necessity prove disagreeable to her.

"Yes, Madame," said Gilbert, "and I will answer it, since your Majesty insists. The people are singing :

The Baker's Wife, she hath some crowns,
Which did not cost her dear.

You know whom people call the Baker's Wife ?"

"Yes, Monsieur, I know they do me that honor. I am already accustomed to such nicknames. They used to call me Madame Deficiency. Is there any analogy between the first surname and the last ?"

"Yes, Madame, and to assure yourself of it you have only to ponder the two verses which I have given you :

The Baker's Wife, she hath some crowns,
Which did not cost her dear."

The Queen repeated : "*Some crowns which did not cost her dear.* I do not understand, Monsieur."

Gilbert held his tongue.

"Well," resumed the Queen with impatience, "can you not see that I do not understand ?"

"And your Majesty continues to insist upon an explanation ?"

"Undoubtedly !"

"The song means, Madame, that your Majesty has had very complaisant ministers, especially Ministers of Finance, — Monsieur de Calonne, for example. The people know that your Majesty had only to ask, in order for him to give ; and as it costs no great pains to ask, if one is Queen, when to ask is to command, the people sing :

The Baker's Wife, she hath some crowns,
Which did not cost her dear ;

that is to say, which cost you only the trouble of asking."

The Queen clenched her white hand, resting on the red velvet of the door-ledge.

"Well said !" she added. "So that is what they sing ! Next, if you please, Monsieur Gilbert, since you explicate their meaning so well, let us pass on to what they shout."

"They say, Madame : *We shall no longer lack bread, since we bring back the Baker, the Baker's Wife, and the Baker's Boy.*"

"You can explain this second insult as clearly as the first, can you not ? I depend upon it !"

"Madame," said Gilbert, with the same amiable stoicism, "if you will ponder well, not the words so much as the intention of the people, you will see that you have not so much to complain of as you fancy."

"Let us see," said the Queen with a nervous smile. "You know, Monsieur Doctor, that I ask nothing better than to be enlightened. Go on ! I listen ! I am impatient !"

"Rightly or wrongly, Madame, the people are told that a big trade in flour has been carried on at Versailles, and that this is why flour no longer comes to Paris. Who feeds the poor ? The baker and bakeress of

the neighborhood. Towards whom do the husband, the father, the son turn their suppliant hands when, for want of money, the child, the wife, or the father is perishing with hunger? Towards the baker, towards the baker's wife. To whom do men pray, next to God who produces the harvest? To those who distribute the bread. Are not you, Madame, is not the King, is not this royal child himself, are you not all three really distributors of God's bread? Do not be astonished, then, at the pleasant name which these people give you, and be thankful for the hope it affords, that when once the King, the Queen, and Monsieur the Dauphin dwell in the midst of twelve hundred thousand famished souls, those twelve hundred thousand sufferers will want for nothing."

The Queen closed her eyes an instant, and one could note a motion of her mouth and throat, as if she tried to swallow her chagrin, along with the acrid saliva which burned her throat.

"Is that what they cry, these people, what they cry yonder, before and behind us? Ought we to thank them for the nicknames they give us, for the songs they sing?"

"Oh yes, Madame, and most sincerely; because the song they sing is but an expression of good humor, because the nicknames which they give you are only manifestations of their hopes; but their shouts are the expression of their desires."

"Ah, the people wish prosperity to Messieurs Lafayette and Mirabeau!"

As may be inferred from this, the Queen had heard perfectly well the songs, the shouts, and the cries.

"Yes, Madame," said Gilbert, "because, by living, Lafayette and Monsieur Mirabeau, who are separated, as you can see at present, separated by an abyss over which

you are suspended, — because, by living prosperously, Lafayette and Mirabeau may be reunited, and by this reunion save the monarchy."

"That is to say, Monsieur," cried the Queen, "that the monarchy is so low that it can only be saved by those two men?"

Gilbert was preparing to answer, when cries of terror, mingled with atrocious bursts of laughter, made themselves heard, and there was a great movement in the crowd, which instead of drawing Gilbert away, brought him close to the window, against which he clung, conjecturing that something might happen which would necessitate the employment of his voice or his strength in defence of the Queen.

The two head-carriers, having compelled the unlucky Leonard to powder and curl the two heads, desired the horrible pleasure of exhibiting them to the Queen, as other head-bearers — or possibly these very men — had exhibited to Berthier the head of his son-in-law, Foulon.

The cries came from the crowd, scattering at the very sight of the two heads, as the rabble recoiled upon itself, opening the way to let them pass.

"In the name of Heaven, Madame," said Gilbert, "do not look to the right."

The Queen was not the woman to obey such an injunction, without assuring herself of the reason why the request was made. Consequently, her first movement was to turn her eyes towards the point forbidden by Gilbert, and she uttered a terrible cry.

Suddenly she removed her eyes from this horrible spectacle, as if they had encountered a sight yet more horrible, as if, fascinated by a Medusa's head, her eyes could not detach themselves from it.

This head of Medusa was that of the Unknown, whom we have seen chatting and drinking with Master Gamain in the tavern at Sevres Bridge, and who now stood with folded arms, leaning against a tree.

The Queen's hand detached itself from the velvet doorway, and leaning on Gilbert's shoulder she grasped him an instant, as if to bury her nails in his flesh.

Gilbert turned. He saw that the Queen was pale, her lips bloodless and trembling, her eyes fixed.

Perhaps he would have attributed this nervous over-excitement to the presence of the two heads, if the vision of Marie Antoinette had been arrested by either of them; but she gazed horizontally before her, at about the height of a man.

Gilbert followed the direction of her glance, and as the Queen uttered a cry of terror, he uttered one of astonishment.

Then they both murmured, at the same instant of time, "Cagliostro!"

On his side, the man leaning against the tree saw the Queen perfectly well. He made with his hand a sign to Gilbert, as much as to say, "Come here!"

At that moment the vehicles made a movement to resume their journey. By a motion mechanical, instinctive, natural, the Queen pushed Gilbert, lest he should be bruised by the wheel.

He supposed that she pushed him towards that man. Even if the Queen had not given Gilbert a push, as soon as he recognized who it was, in a certain way he was no longer master of himself.

Consequently, standing immovable, he let the escort pass by him.

Then, following the disguised workman, who occasionally turned to see if he was obeyed, Gilbert went after

him into a narrow lane, ascending towards Bellevue by a rapid declivity, and disappeared behind a wall, at the very moment when the carriage and escort disappeared on the side towards Paris, completely concealed by the declivity of the hill, which lost itself in an abyss.

CHAPTER IV.

FATALITY.

GILBERT followed his guide, who preceded him by some twenty paces, half-way up the hill. There they found themselves in the presence of a large and beautiful house. He who walked ahead drew a key from his pocket, and opened a little door, designed to enable the master of the house to go and come without confiding to servants his outgoings and incomings.

The door was left ajar, which signified, as clearly as possible, that the first comer invited his companion to follow.

Gilbert entered and softly shut the door, which swung silently on its hinges, and so fastened itself that one could not hear the click of the bolt.

Such a lock would have roused the admiration of Master Gamain.

Once inside, Gilbert found himself in an apartment whose walls were overlaid, to the height of a man, — in such a way, that is, that the eye need not lose one of their marvellous details, — with bronze panels, modelled from those with which Ghiberti enriched the Baptistery at Florence.

The feet sank into soft Turkish carpeting.

At the left was an open door. Gilbert thought that this door was purposely left open, and entered another apartment, hung with India satin, with furniture of the same stuff as the tapestry. One of those fantastic birds,

such as the Chinese paint or embroider, covered the ceiling with his wings of gold and azure, and held in his talons the chandelier, which, with splendidly wrought candelabra, representing lily-tufts, served to illuminate the room.

A single painting adorned the place, and was hung by the glass over the fireplace. It represented one of Raphael's Madonnas.

Gilbert was gazing with admiration at this masterpiece when he heard, or rather divined, that a door opened behind him. He turned, and recognized Cagliostro, coming from a sort of toilet closet.

A moment had sufficed him to remove the stains from his arms and face, to give his hair, still black, a more aristocratic brush, and completely change his clothes.

He was no longer the mechanic, with black hands, with plastered hair, with mud-soiled shoes, with corduroy breeches, and a shirt of unbleached linen. He was the elegant nobleman, whom we have already twice presented to our readers, first in Joseph Balsamo, and afterwards in The Queen's Necklace.

His garments covered with embroidery, his hands sparkling with diamonds, contrasted strongly with Gilbert's black suit, and the plain gold ring, a gift from Washington, which he wore on his finger.

With a genial and smiling face Cagliostro came forward and opened his arms to Gilbert.

Gilbert threw himself into them. "Dear master!" he exclaimed.

"Wait a bit!" said Cagliostro laughing. "You have made such progress since we parted, above all in philosophy, that to-day it is you who are the master, while I am hardly worthy to be a pupil."

"Thanks for the compliment," said Gilbert; "but

suppose I have made such progress, how do you know it? It is eight years since we met."

"Do you fancy, my dear Doctor, that you are one of those men whom people forget because they do not see them? I have not seen you for eight years, it is true; but I can tell you, almost day by day, what you have been about during these eight years."

"Really now?"

"Will you always be sceptical as to my second sight?"

"You know I am a mathematician!"

"And therefore incredulous? Let us see now! You came to France the first time summoned by family matters. These family matters do not concern me, and consequently —"

"Oh no," said Gilbert, thinking to embarrass Cagliostro; "speak on, dear master."

"Well, at that time you were anxious about the education of your son Sebastien, wishing to place him in a small city, some eighteen or twenty leagues from Paris, and to regulate your affairs with your agent, — a good man, whom you kept in Paris in spite of himself, and who, for a thousand reasons, should have been near his wife."

"Truly, master mine, you are a marvel."

"Hold on! The second time you returned to Paris because political affairs drove you to it, as they have driven so many others. You had prepared certain pamphlets, and sent them to King Louis the Sixteenth; and as there is still something of the old Adam within, you were more proud of the approbation of a king than mayhap you would be of that of my predecessor in your education, Jean Jacques Rousseau, who now, if he were living, would be reckoned greater than a king. You were anxious to know what the descendant of Louis the

Fourteenth, of Henry the Fourth, and of Saint Louis thought of Doctor Gilbert. Unhappily there was a little affair whereof you had not dreamed, but which nevertheless led me, one fine day, to find you all bleeding, your breast plowed by a ball, in a grotto in the Azore Islands, where my vessel happened accidentally to touch. This little affair concerned Mademoiselle Andrée de Taverny, now become the Comtesse de Charny, in all prosperity and honor, ready to render any service to the Queen. Now as the Queen could refuse nothing to the woman who married the Comte de Charny, the Queen demanded and obtained for your benefit a secret warrant of imprisonment. You were arrested on the way from Havre to Paris, and taken to the Bastille, where you would yet be, dear Doctor, if the rabble had not one day overturned the Bastille with a wave of the hand. Soon, like the good Royalist you are, my dear Gilbert, you sided with the King, who has made you one of his attendant physicians. Yesterday, or rather this morning, you powerfully contributed to the welfare of the royal family by hastening to rouse Lafayette, who was sleeping the sleep of the just; and an hour ago, when I saw you, believing the Queen (who, between ourselves, my dear Gilbert, detests you) to be menaced, you were ready to raise a rampart before your sovereign with your own body. Is it not so? Let me not forget one particular, of no small importance, a magnetic séance in the King's presence, — the recovery of a certain casket from certain hands, a casket which had been seized through the agency of one Padeloup? See now, tell me if I have made one mistake or important omission, and I am ready to make my apology."

Gilbert remained stupefied before this extraordinary man, who so well knew how to adapt means to ends, that those whom he influenced were tempted to believe

that, like the Almighty, he had power to comprehend at once the totality and the details of the world, and to read the very hearts of men.

"Yes, it is even so," said he, "and you are still Cagliostro, the magician, the sorcerer, the enchanter."

Cagliostro smiled with satisfaction. Evidently he was proud of having produced on Gilbert the impression which, in spite of himself, Gilbert allowed to mantle his face.

Gilbert continued : "As I love you at least as much as you love me, my dear master, and as my desire to know what has happened to you, during our separation, is at least as great as that which has led you to inform yourself so faithfully about me, will you tell me, if the request is not indiscreet, in what part of the world you have displayed your genius and exercised your power?"

Cagliostro smiled. "I too," he said, "like yourself, have seen kings, many of them even, but for another purpose. You approach in order to uphold them; but as for me, I approach in order to dethrone them. You seek to establish a Constitutional King, and you do not attain your end; but I try to make philosophers of emperors, kings, and princes, and I achieve my purpose."

"Verily?" interrupted Gilbert, with a skeptical air.

"Certainly! It is true that they were admirably prepared for it by Voltaire, D'Alembert, and Diderot, those new Mozentiuses, those sublime contemners of the gods, and by the example of that dear King Frederick, of whom we have so unfortunately been bereaved; but then, you know we are all mortal, — with the exception of those who never die, like myself and Count Saint Germain. We have the Emperor Joseph the Second, brother of our beloved Queen, who suppressed three-quarters of the convents, confiscated the ecclesiastical benefices, who

even drove the Carmelites from their cells, and sent to his sister, Marie Antoinette, engravings representing the uncapped nuns trying on modern fashions, and unfrocked monks having their hair frizzled. We have the King of Denmark, who commenced by being the headsman for his physician Struensee, — a precocious philosopher, who said, at seventeen: 'It is Voltaire who has made me a man and has taught me to think.' There is the Empress Catherine, who took such long strides in philosophy, even while she was dismembering Poland, that Voltaire wrote: 'Diderot, D'Alembert, and myself are decorating altars to you.' There is the King of Sweden; and there are, finally, plenty of Princes of the Empire, and of all Germany."

"It remains only for you to convert the Pope, my dear master; and as I believe nothing to be impossible to you, I hope you will attain that result."

"Ah, as to that, it would be difficult. I just escaped from his clutches. For six months I was in the Castle of Saint Angelo, as you were three months in the Bastille."

"Bah! and did the people beyond the Tiber destroy the Castle of Saint Angelo, as the populace of the Faubourg Saint Antoine pulled down the Bastille?"

"No, my dear Doctor. The Roman people have not yet reached that point. — Oh, be tranquil; it will come some day! The Papacy also will have its Fifth and Sixth of October, and in that harmony Versailles and the Vatican will shake hands."

"But I thought that once inside the Castle of Saint Angelo one could not get out."

"Bah! Benvenuto Cellini!"

"Did you, like him, get a pair of wings like a modern Icarus, and soar across the Tiber?"

"That would have been impossible, inasmuch as I was lodged, with apostolic precaution, in a dungeon very deep and very dark."

"Yet you did get out?"

"As you see, here I am."

"You corrupted your jailer with the power of gold?"

"I was unlucky; I stumbled on a jailer incorruptible."

"Incorruptible? The devil!"

"Yes, but happily he was not immortal. Luck, or one believing more than I do might say Providence, planned it so that he died the day after his third refusal to open my prison-doors."

"He died suddenly?"

"Yes."

"Ah!"

"It was necessary to replace him, and they did replace him."

"And this one was not incorruptible?"

"This one said to me, on the very day when he entered upon his duties, as he brought me my supper: 'Eat well, get strength, for we have a journey to make to-night.' Pardieu, the brave fellow did not lie. That same night we each ruined three horses and we covered a hundred miles."

"And what said the rulers when your escape was discovered?"

"They said nothing! They clothed the other jailer, who was not yet buried, with some garments which I had left behind. Then they fired a pistol at the middle of his face, let the pistol fall by his side, and declared that having procured a weapon, they knew not how, I had blown out my brains. Then they declared me dead, and interred the jailer under my name. You see, my dear Gilbert, that I am fairly a corpse, — that if I should

claim to be alive, they might respond with my record of decease, and so prove that I am dead ; but there is no need of that, for it suits me very well at this juncture to disappear from the world. I made a plunge as far as the sombre borders, as once said the most illustrious Abbé Delille, and I have reappeared here in Paris, under another name."

"And what do you call yourself, if I do not commit an indiscretion by asking ?"

"I call myself the Baron Zannone. I am a Genoese banker. I discount the notes of princes. Good paper, is it not, especially the sort issued by Cardinal Rohan ? By the way, are you in need of money, my dear Gilbert ? You know that my heart and my purse are at your disposal, to-day as always."

"I thank you !"

"Ah, you think perhaps you will be in my way, because you met me to-day attired as a mechanic ? Don't worry yourself about that. That is one of my disguises. You know my notions about life, that it is a long Carnival, wherein everybody is more or less masked. Anyhow, remember this, my dear Gilbert, — if ever you have need of money, here in my secretary is my special deposit, you understand. The large safe is in Paris, Rue Saint Claude. If at any time you should need money, whether I am here or not here, you may come in. I will show you how to open my little door. You will press the spring — see, this is how I press it ! — and you will always find there nearly a million."

Cagliostro pressed the spring. The front of the secretary lowered itself, and brought to light a mass of gold and several bundles of banknotes.

"You are indeed a wonderful man," said Gilbert laughing ; "but you know that with my twenty thousand

livres of income I am richer than the King. Meanwhile do you not fear being disturbed in Paris?"

"On account of the affair of the necklace? Go along! They dare not bother me. In a country where there are such spirits, I have only to say a word to raise a riot. You forget that I am somewhat the friend of everybody who is popular, — of Lafayette, of Monsieur Necker, of Mirabeau, of yourself."

"And what have you to do in Paris?"

"Who knows? What you have been doing in the United States, perhaps, — establishing a republic."

Gilbert shook his head. "France has not the republican spirit," he said.

"We will make her another republic, nevertheless."

"The King will resist."

"That is possible!"

"The nobility will take up arms."

"That is probable."

"Then what will you do?"

"Well, if we don't make a republic we shall make a revolution."

Gilbert let his head fall upon his breast. "If we come to that point, Joseph, it will be dreadful," he said.

"Terrible indeed, if we encounter on the road many men of your ability, Gilbert."

"I am not strong, my friend," said Gilbert. "I am honest, that is all."

"Alas, so much the worse, and that is why I must convince you, Gilbert."

"I am convinced."

"That you should prevent us from doing our work?"

"At least that we should detain you on the road."

"You are foolish, Gilbert! You do not comprehend the mission of France. France is the brain of the world."

It is essential that France should think, and think liberally, in order that the world may act as France thinks, liberally also. Do you know what upset the Bastille, Gilbert ? ”

“ The people.”

“ You do not understand ! You mistake the effect for the cause. For five hundred years, my friend, there have been confined in the Bastille counts, lords, princes, and still it remained steadfast. One day an angry king conceived the awful idea of imprisoning Thought, which requires space, breadth, infinity. Thought burst its way out of the Bastille, and the populace entered by the breach.”

“ That is true,” murmured Gilbert.

“ You recall what Voltaire wrote to Chauvelin, on the second of March, 1764, nearly twenty-six years ago ? ”

“ Repeat it ! ”

“ Voltaire wrote as follows : ‘ Everything that I see is putting forth the seedlings of a revolution which will infallibly come, and of which I shall not have the pleasure of being a witness. The French are tardy, but they always arrive. The light is coming nearer and nearer, at such a pace that, on the first occasion, the outbreak will be heard, and there will be a grand uproar. The young are indeed happy ; they will see great things.’ What do you say as to the uproar of yesterday and to-day, hey ? ”

“ Terrible ! ”

“ What do you say of the things you saw ? ”

“ Frightful ! ”

“ Indeed ! Well, you are only at the beginning, Gilbert.”

“ Prophet of Evil ! ”

“ Listen ! Three days since I was with a physician of

much merit, — a philanthropist. Do you know what he was busying himself about at that moment ?”

“He was searching for a remedy for some great disease, reputed to be incurable.”

“Oh no ! He was seeking to remedy life, not death.”

“What do you say ?”

“Epigram apart, I tell you that he found — having before him the pestilence, the cholera, the yellow fever, the smallpox, the apoplexy, and five hundred other maladies considered incurable, besides ten or twelve hundred which may become so if not treated in season, — to say nothing of the cannon, the gun, the sword, the poniard, water, fire, the fall from a roof, the gibbet, and the rack — he found that there were not methods enough of getting out of life, although there is but one way of getting into it, and at that moment he was inventing a machine, — very ingenious, on my word, — which he expects to offer the nation, in order to put to death fifty, sixty, or eighty persons in less than an hour. Well, my dear Gilbert, do you believe that so distinguished a physician, so humane a philanthropist as Doctor Guillotin, would busy himself with such a machine, unless the need of such a machine makes itself felt ? So far as my knowledge goes, this machine is no novelty ; and a proof of this is that one day, when I was at the Baron Taverney’s, — and by-the-by, you must remember the occurrence, for *you* were there likewise ; but you had eyes only for a young girl called Nicole, — the proof is, that the Queen, having come thither by chance, — she was then only the Dauphiness, and hardly that ; well, the proof lies in this, that I made her see this machine in a decanter, and the thing inspired her with so much fear that she screamed and lost her consciousness. Well, my dear fellow, this machine, at that epoch, existed only

in outline ; but some day you will see it perform its functions, for it will be tried. I tell you this beforehand, that if you are not blind you may recognize the finger of Providence, which, foreseeing a time to come when the headsman would have too large a task, if he simply held on to the old methods, indicated a new method by which he might fulfil his duty."

"Count, Count, you were more consoling than this in America."

"I believe you ! I was then amidst a nation rising, and I am now amidst a social order which nears its end. Nobility and royalty march together towards the tomb in our old world, and that tomb is an abyss."

"I give up the nobility, my dear Count ; or rather the nobility abandoned itself, on the famous night of the Fourth of August ; but let us preserve royalty, for it is the palladium of the nation."

"Ah, what fine words, my dear Gilbert ; but did the palladium save Troy ? Preserve royalty ? Do you believe it an easy thing to save royalty, with such a King ?"

"But he is the descendant of a grand race."

"Yes, a race of eagles ending in paroquets ! In order that you, and all such Utopians, may be able to save royalty, royalty must first make an effort to save itself. Let us see ! You have seen Louis the Sixteenth, you often see him, and you are not the man to see anything without studying it. Well now, frankly tell me : Can royalty survive, represented by such a king ? Is he your ideal of the sceptre-bearer ? Do you imagine that Charlemagne, Saint Louis, Philip Augustus, Francis the First, Henry the Fourth, and Louis the Fourteenth had such flabby flesh, such hanging lips, such inanity in the eyes, such indecision in the gait. No, those old fellows

were men. There was nerve, blood, and life under their royal cloaks, and they were not yet bastardized by the transmission of only one strain. There is a good medical idea which those short-sighted men have forgotten. To preserve some species of animals, and even vegetables, in continual freshness and constant vigor, Nature prescribes the intermixture of species and the union of families. As grafting in the vegetable kingdom is the chief cause of the goodness and beauty of the species, so is it with man. Marriage between parents too near akin is a cause of decay in individuals. Nature suffers, languishes, and degenerates, after several generations have been produced from the same blood. On the other hand, Nature is revived, regenerated, and re-enforced, when a new and prolific principle is introduced into the line. Note the heroes who found great families, and the feeble men who ruin them. Consider Henry the Third, the last of the Valois. Observe Gaston, the last of the Medicis. Think of Cardinal York, the last of the Stuarts; and of Charles the Sixth, last of the Hapsburgs. Well, the chief cause of degeneracy in these races is the intermarriage among their families, which has made itself felt in all the dynasties whereof we have spoken, and more sensibly in the house of Bourbon than in any other. Going back from Louis Fifteenth to Henry Fourth and Marie de Medicis, we find Henry Fourth to be five times the great-great-grandfather of Louis Fifteenth, and Marie de Medicis his great-great-grandmother through five different channels. If we go back to Philip Third of Spain and Margaret of Austria, Philip Third is three times the great-great-grandfather, and Margaret of Austria is three times the great-great-grandmother of Louis Fifteenth; and I have reckoned as follows, as I have nothing to do but reckon: of the thirty-two great-great-

grandmothers and great-great-grandfathers of Louis Fifteenth there are six members of the house of Bourbon, five of the house of Medicis, eleven of the Austrian house of Hapsburg, three of the house of Savoy, three of the house of Stuart, and one Danish princess. Subject a dog or horse of the best blood to such a test, and by the fourth generation you will have a jade and a mongrel. How the devil can we resist these influences, we who are but men? What say you to my calculation, Doctor, you who are a mathematician?"

"I say, dear sorcerer," said Gilbert, rising and taking his hat, "I say that your calculation frightens me, and makes me think all the more that my place is by the King's side."

Gilbert took a few steps towards the entrance, when Cagliostro checked him.

"Listen, Gilbert!" he said. "You know whether I love you; you know whether, to spare you pain, I am capable of exposing myself to a thousand sorrows. Well, believe me — a piece of advice —"

"What?"

"If the King would save himself the King should quit France while there is yet time. In three months, in a year, in six months perhaps, it will be too late."

"Count," said Gilbert, "would you counsel a soldier to abandon his post because there is danger if he remains?"

"If that soldier was already captured, surrounded, confined, disarmed, so that he could not defend himself, above all if the exposure of his life would endanger the life of a half-million of men, — yes, I *would* counsel him to flee. And you yourself, Gilbert, will say this to the King. The King will listen to you when it is too late. Do not wait till to-morrow; tell him to-day. Do not wait till evening; tell him this within an hour."

"Count, you know that I am of the fatalistic school. Come what will, as long as I have any power whatever over the King, the King will remain in France, and I shall remain with him. Adieu, Count, we shall meet again in the combat, and perhaps sleep side by side on the field of battle."

"Go!" murmured Cagliostro. "No man, however intelligent he may be, can escape his evil fate. I sought you, in order to say this to you, and I have said it. You have heard it! My warning is useless, like Cassandra's. Adieu!"

"Tell me frankly, Count," said Gilbert, pausing on the threshold of the room, and looking fixedly at Cagliostro, "do you here claim, as you did in America, to be able to read men's future in their faces?"

"Gilbert," replied Cagliostro, "as surely as in the sky you trace the pathway of the stars, although the generality of men believe them immovable or erratic."

"Well, then — Stop, somebody is rapping at the door."

"That is true."

"Tell me the fate of him who raps at the door, whoever he may be. Tell me by what sort of death he will die, and when he will die."

"Be it so," said Cagliostro. "Let us admit him ourselves."

Gilbert advanced towards the door at the end of the corridor, of which we have before spoken, with a beating heart which he could not repress, although he said to himself that it was absurd to take such charlatanism seriously.

The door was opened. A man of distinguished bearing, tall in stature, in whose face was printed a strong expression of good-will, appeared on the threshold, and threw upon Gilbert a rapid glance, not free from disquiet.

"Good-day, Marquis," said Cagliostro.

"Good-day, Baron," responded the Marquis.

Then, as Cagliostro perceived that the look of the newcomer reverted to Gilbert, he said: "Marquis, Doctor Gilbert, one of my friends. My dear Gilbert, the Marquis de Favras, one of my customers."

The two men saluted each other.

Then addressing the stranger he continued: "Marquis, if you will enter the salon and wait for me an instant, in five seconds I will be at your service."

The Marquis bowed a second time, as he passed before the two men, and withdrew.

"Well?" asked Gilbert.

"You wish to know by what death the Marquis will die?"

"Have you not promised to tell me?"

Cagliostro gave a peculiar smile. Then, after looking about to see that nobody could overhear, he said: "Have you ever seen a nobleman hanged?"

"No!"

"Well, it is a curious spectacle; and you will be in the Place de Grève on the day when they hang the Marquis de Favras."

Then conducting Gilbert to the street door he added: "Hold! When you wish to come and see me without noise, without being seen and without seeing anybody but myself, push this button from right to left and from up to down, — so. — Adieu. Excuse me, but it is not fair to keep those waiting who have not long to live."

Then he went away, leaving Gilbert amazed at the prognostication, which excited his astonishment, but did not conquer his incredulity.

CHAPTER V.

THE TUILERIES.

MEANWHILE the King, the Queen, and the royal family continued their way to Paris.

Progress was so slow, — retarded, as it was, by the body-guard marching on foot, by the armed fishwives mounted on their horses, by the men and women of the market-place, riding on the decorated cannons, by the one hundred carriages of the Deputies, by two or three hundred wagon-loads of wheat and flour, taken at Versailles and covered with the yellow leaves of autumn, — that it was not till six o'clock that the royal coach, containing so much sorrow, so much hatred, so much passion, and so much innocence, arrived at the barrier.

During the journey the young Prince was hungry, and asked for something to eat. The Queen looked about her. It seemed very easy to procure a little bread for the Dauphin, as every man in the crowd bore a loaf on the point of his bayonet.

She looked for Gilbert. Gilbert, as we know, had followed Cagliostro.

If Gilbert had been there, the Queen would not have hesitated about asking him for a morsel of bread ; but the Queen was unwilling to make such a request to one of these men of the populace, whom she regarded with horror ; so she pressed the Dauphin to her breast, and said to him as he cried : “ My child, we have no food ;

but wait till this evening, for perhaps we shall have some this evening."

The Dauphin extended his little hand towards the men who carried the loaves on their bayonets, and said: "Those people there have some!"

"Yes, my child, but that bread is theirs, not ours, and they went to hunt for it in Versailles, because — so they say — they have had none in Paris for three days."

"For three days?" said the child; "they have not eaten for three days, mamma?"

Ordinarily etiquette required that the Dauphin should call his mother *Madame*, but the poor child was as hungry as if he were simply the child of a commoner; and being hungry, he called his mother *mamma*.

"No, my child," responded the Queen.

"In that case they must be very hungry," said the child with a sigh; and ceasing to complain he tried to sleep.

Poor child of royalty! More than once before death came to him, as come it did, he begged ineffectually for bread.

At the city gates the procession again came to a halt, — this time not for rest, but for a celebration of their arrival. That arrival must be celebrated by songs and dances.

It was a strange pause, almost as portentous in its joy, as the others had been in their fear.

The fishwives dismounted from their horses, — that is, from the horses of the guardsmen, — and fastened the sabres and guns to the saddlebows. The women and porters from the market-place descended from their gun-carriages, which were thus left frightfully bare.

Then they formed a ring which surrounded the King's carriage, separating it from the National Guard and from

the Deputies, — an alarming harbinger of what was to happen later.

This ring, with the good intention of showing its joy to the royal family, sang, screamed, howled, the women embracing the men, and the men making the women leap like those in the wanton orgies of a Teniers picture.

This took place when night had almost fallen on a day gloomy and rainy, so that the ring, illuminated only by torches on the cannon and other warlike implements, took on tints fantastic and almost infernal, in the changes of shadow and light.

After some half-an-hour of cries, clamor, singing, and dancing in the mud, the escort gave an immense *hurra*. Everybody who had a loaded gun, man, woman, or child, discharged it into the air, without any special concern about the bullets, which presently came down again, cleaving the puddles of water like heavy hailstones.

The Dauphin and his sister wept. They were so frightened as to be no longer hungry.

The procession followed the line of the river piers, and arrived at the square by the Hôtel de Ville. There the troops were formed into a hollow square, to keep back all carriages except the King's, and to prevent all persons, except those belonging to the royal household or the National Assembly, from entering the building.

The Queen presently perceived Weber, her confidential attendant and foster-brother, — an Austrian, who had accompanied her from Vienna, — making every effort to pass through the line, and to enter the Hôtel de Ville with her.

She called to him, and he ran to her side.

Noticing at Versailles that the National Guard had the place of honor for the day, Weber had dressed him-

self as a National Guardsman, in order to give himself a position, thanks to which he might become useful to the Queen; and to the simple uniform of a volunteer he had even added the decorations of a staff-officer. The equerry of the Queen's cavalcade had lent him a horse.

In order not to awake suspicion he had held himself aloof throughout the journey, with the intention, be it well understood, of coming nearer if the Queen needed him. Being now recognized and summoned by the Queen he hastened to her at once.

"Why dost thou try to force the lines, Weber?" demanded the Queen, who had preserved the old habit of thee-and-thouing him.

"To be near your Majesty, Madame."

"Thou wilt be very useless to me in the Hôtel de Ville, Weber," said the Queen, "although thou mayest be very helpful to me elsewhere."

"Where, Madame?"

"At the Tuileries, my dear Weber, at the Tuileries, where no one expects us; and where, if thou dost not precede us, we shall find neither a bed, a chamber, nor a morsel of food."

"Ah!" said the King, "that is an excellent idea of yours, Madame."

The Queen had spoken in German, and the King, who understood German but did not speak it, spoke in English.

The bystanders heard, but did not understand. This foreign language, for which they had an instinctive dislike, roused a murmur around the carriage, a murmur which threatened to become a roar, when the hollow square suddenly opened in front of the carriage and closed in behind it.

Bailly, one of the most popular men of that epoch, Bailly, whom we saw during the first journey of the King,

— on that occasion when bayonets, guns, and cannon were concealed under flowers, forgotten in the second journey, — Bailly awaited the King and Queen at the foot of a throne improvised to receive them, — a throne badly placed, badly constructed, creaking beneath the velvet which covered it, — veritably a throne suitable to such an occasion.

The Mayor of Paris addressed the King on this second trip almost exactly as he addressed him on the first trip.

The King responded : “ It is always with pleasure *and confidence* that I come into the midst of the people of my good city of Paris.”

The King spoke low, in a voice weakened by fatigue and hunger. Bailly repeated the sentence louder, so that everybody might hear it ; only, intentionally or unintentionally, he omitted the two words *and confidence*.

The Queen noticed this, and her bitterness rejoiced at thus finding a passage into the open day.

“ Pardon, Monsieur Mayor,” she said, sufficiently loud for those around her not to lose a word or phrase, “ either you did not hear correctly, or your memory is short.”

“ So please you, Madame ? ” stammered Bailly, turning towards the Queen his astronomical eye, which could see so well in the sky and so badly on the earth.

The Queen responded : “ The King said, Monsieur, it was always with pleasure *and confidence* that he came into the midst of the inhabitants of his good city of Paris. As some may doubt if he now comes hither with pleasure, it is better to have it known that at least he comes with *confidence*.”

Then she mounted the three steps of the throne and seated herself near the King, in order to hear the discourse of the electors.

Meanwhile Weber, on a horse before which the crowd gave way, thanks to his uniform of staff-officer, found his way to the palace of the Tuileries.

For a long time this royal Lodge of the Tuileries, as it was formerly called, — this residence built by Catherine de Medicis, and occupied by her for a time, then abandoned by Charles Ninth, Henry Third, Henry Fourth, and Louis Thirteenth for the Louvre, and by Louis Fourteenth, Louis Fifteenth, and Louis Sixteenth for Versailles, — had been little more than an appendage to the other royal palaces, and was occupied by certain persons connected with the Court ; but therein neither King nor Queen had perhaps ever set foot.

Weber went through the apartments ; and, knowing the customs of the King and Queen, he selected the one occupied by Madame de la Marek, and that belonging to the Marshals Noailles and Mouchy.

Her apartment, which the Countess at once abandoned, had this advantage, that, it was ready to receive the Queen, with its furniture, linen, curtains, and carpets, which Weber bought.

Towards ten o'clock was heard the noise of their Majesties' coach, as it drove up.

Everything was prepared ; and, hastening into the presence of his august employers, Weber exclaimed : " Attend the King ! "

The King, the Queen, Madame Royale, the Dauphin, Madame Elizabeth, and Andrée entered. Monsieur de Provence had already returned to the chateau at Luxembourg.

The King turned his eyes anxiously on all sides ; and in entering the salon he saw through a half-open door, leading into a side room, a supper-table spread at the end of that room.

At the same time the door opened, and an usher appeared, saying: "The King is served!"

"Oh, what a man of resources is that Weber," said the King with an exclamation of joy. "Madame, you will say to him, in my behalf, that I am much pleased with him."

"I will not fail to do so, Sire," replied the Queen, as with a sigh, which responded to this exclamation of the King, she entered the dining-room.

Plates were laid for the King, the Queen, for Madame Royale, for the Dauphin, and for Madame Elizabeth; but there was no place provided for Andrée.

Pressed by hunger the King did not remark this omission, which was not a slight, but happened in accordance with the laws of strictest etiquette; but the Queen, whom nothing escaped, perceived it at the first glance, and said: "The King will permit the Comtesse de Charny to sup with him, — is it not so, Sire?"

"Why not?" cried the King. "To-day we dine as a family, and the Countess belongs to the family."

"Sire," said the Countess, "is this a command from the King?"

The King looked at the Countess with astonishment.

"No, Madame," said he, "it is a petition which the King makes to you."

"In that case," replied the Countess, "I beg the King to excuse me, as I am not hungry."

"How? You are not hungry?" cried the King, who could not comprehend how one should not be famished at ten o'clock in the evening, after such a wearisome journey, especially when one had eaten nothing since ten o'clock in the forenoon, at which hour they had breakfasted so poorly.

"No, Sire," said Andrée.

"Nor I," said the Queen.

"Nor I," said Madame Elzabeth.

"Oh, you're wrong, Madame," said the King, "for upon the good condition of the stomach depends the good condition of the rest of the body, and even of the spirit; and thereanent is a story by Livy, imitated by Shakespeare and by Lafontaine, which I beg you to consider."

"We know it, Monsieur," said the Queen. "It is a fable which was related to the Roman people by old Menenius, one day during a revolution. On that day the Romans were in revolt, as the French people are to-day. You are right, Sire; certainly that fable is appropriate to the present occasion."

"Well," said the King, passing his plate to be served with soup a second time, "does n't this historic similitude help you to decide, Countess?"

"No, Sire; and I am truly sorry to tell your Majesty that though I wish to obey I cannot do so."

"You are wrong, Countess, for this soup is really perfect. Why is this the first time I have been served with such a soup?"

"Perhaps because you have a new cook, Sire, that of the Comtesse de la Marck, whose apartments we are occupying."

"I will retain him for my service, and desire that he will attach himself to my household. This Weber is truly a miraculous man, Madame."

"Yes," murmured the Queen sadly; "what a pity he cannot be made a cabinet minister!"

The King did not hear, or did not wish to hear; but as he saw Andrée standing there very pale, while the Queen and Madame Elizabeth, though they ate no more than Andrée, remained seated at the table, he turned towards the Comtesse de Charny and said: "Though you

are not hungry, Madame, you cannot say you are not fatigued. If you refuse to eat you will not refuse to sleep! Then he added to the Queen: "Madame, I beseech you to give the Comtesse de Charny permission to retire. In default of nourishment, — sleep!"

Turning then to the servants at his side he said: "I hope it is not with the bed of Madame la Comtesse de Charny as it is with her dinner, and that they have not forgotten to prepare a chamber for her?"

"Oh Sire," said Andrée, "how can you trouble yourself about me, in such a time of distress? An armchair will suffice."

"Not by any means," said the King. "You slept very little last night, or not at all; and it is necessary to-night that you should sleep well. The Queen needs not only her own strength but that of her friends."

Presently a footman returned, who had gone to inquire, and said: "Monsieur Weber, knowing the great favor with which Madame la Comtesse is honored by the Queen, believes that he has anticipated the wishes of her Majesty by reserving for the Countess a chamber adjoining that of the Queen."

The Queen trembled, for she bethought herself that if there was only one chamber for Madame la Comtesse, there was consequently only one chamber for both the Countess and the Count.

Andrée noted the shiver which ran through the veins of the Queen. Not a sensation which agitated either of these two women escaped the other.

"For to-night, and to-night only," said she, "I will accept, Madame. The apartments of her Majesty are too contracted for me to have a chamber there at the expense of her comfort. There must be, somewhere in this big chateau, a little corner for me."

The Queen stammered some unintelligible words.

"Countess," said the King, "you are right. They shall see to all this to-morrow, and you shall be lodged as well as possible."

The Countess bowed respectfully to the King, the Queen, and Madame Elizabeth, and left the room, preceded by a lackey.

The King followed her an instant with his eyes, holding his fork suspended at the height of his mouth. "She is truly a charming creature, that woman," he said. "How happy must be the Count at finding such a phoenix in the Court."

The Queen twisted herself in her armchair, to conceal her pallor, not from the King, who would not have observed it, but from Madame Elizabeth, who would have been alarmed by it; and indeed she was almost ill.

CHAPTER VI.

THE FOUR CANDLES.

As soon as the children had eaten, the Queen craved of the King permission to retire to her own chamber.

"Most willingly, Madame," said the King, "for you must be fatigued ; only, as it is impossible for you not to be hungry before to-morrow, have some food already prepared."

Without answering him the Queen withdrew with her two children.

The King remained at table to finish his supper. Madame Elizabeth, whose devotion could not be altered, even by the occasional coarseness of Louis the Sixteenth, stayed near the King in order to render him those trifling services which escape the notice of even the best servants.

Once in her own room the Queen breathed again. Not one of her women had followed her to Paris, the Queen having commanded them not to quit Versailles until they were so notified.

She busied herself in looking for a large sofa or a capacious armchair for herself, intending to put the children into the bed.

The little Dauphin was already asleep. Hardly had the poor child appeased his hunger than slumber overtook him.

Madame Royale was not asleep ; and, had it been needful, she would not have slept the whole night long. There was much of the Queen in Madame Royale.

As soon as the little Prince was quietly deposited in his armchair, Madame Royale and the Queen looked about in quest of such conveniences as they might find.

The Queen approached a door. As she was about to open it she heard a slight noise on the other side of the door. She listened and heard a second sigh. She bent herself to the level of the lock, and through the keyhole she perceived Andrée, kneeling on a low chair and praying. The Queen resumed her upright position, but looked at the door with an expression of sorrow.

Opposite this door was another. The Queen opened it, and found herself in a chamber pleasantly warmed, and lighted with a shaded lamp, by whose glimmer she saw, with a thrill of joy, two beds, fresh and white as two altars. Then her heart melted, and a tear moistened her dry and burning eyelids.

"Oh Weber, Weber," she murmured, "the Queen told the King it was unfortunate they could not make thee a cabinet minister, but the mother tells thee that thou meritest more than that."

Then, as the little Dauphin was still asleep, she wished to begin by putting Madame Royale to bed; but the latter, with the respect she always showed to her mother, requested permission to aid *her* first, to the end that she might, in her turn, go promptly to bed afterwards.

The Queen smiled sadly, because her daughter supposed she could sleep after such a night of agony, such a day of humiliation; but she wished the girl to remain in this sweet belief.

They commenced by putting the Dauphin to bed. Then Madame Royale, according to custom, knelt at the foot of her bed and said her prayer.

The Queen waited. "It seems to me that thy prayer lasts longer than usual, Therese," she said to the young Princess.

"That is because my brother fell asleep without dreaming of saying his prayers, poor child," said Madame Royale; "and as he is accustomed each evening to pray for you and for the King, I said his little prayer after my own, that nothing may be wanting in our petitions to God."

The Queen grasped Madame Royale, and pressed the child to her heart. The fountain of weeping, already opened by the thoughtfulness of the good Weber, and rekindled by the piety of Madame Royale, gushed abundantly and quickly from her eyes, and tears profoundly sad but not bitter rolled down her cheeks.

She stood by the bed of Madame Royale, as immovable as the Angel of Maternity, till she saw the eyes of the young Princess close, till she felt the muscles of her hands — which pressed her own with such tender and deep filial love — detach themselves under the relaxation of sleep.

Then she gently laid her child's hands in bed, and covered them with the quilt, that she might not suffer from cold, if the chamber should grow chilly during the night. Then, placing on the sleeping forehead of the future martyr a kiss, light as a breath and sweet as a reverie, she re-entered her own chamber.

This chamber was illuminated by a candelabra bearing four candles. The candelabra was placed on a table. This table was covered with a red cloth.

The Queen seated herself in front of the table, and with staring eyes let her head fall between her closed hands, so that she could see nothing except the red cloth spread before her. Twice or thrice she shook her head

mechanically at this bloody reflection. It seemed as if her eyes were distended with blood, her temples beating with fever, and her ears almost bursting. Then, with a stormy movement, all her life passed again before her.

She remembered that she was born on November Second, 1755, the day of the Lisbon earthquake, which killed more than fifty thousand people and overthrew two hundred churches.

She remembered that in the first French chamber where she lay, at Strasburg, the tapestry represented the Massacre of the Innocents; and that on the same evening, by the uncertain light of the night-lamp, it seemed to her that she saw blood oozing from the wounds of the poor babes, and that the faces of the murderers took on an expression so hateful that she called for succor in her alarm, and ordered that at dawn they should depart from a city which left her with so fearful a reminiscence of the first night she passed in France.

She remembered that, in continuing her journey towards Paris, she had to stop at the mansion of the Baron de Taverney; that there she met, for the first time, that miserable Cagliostro, who had since obtained, through the affair of the necklace, such a terrible influence over her destiny; and who during that meeting — so vivid in her memory that it seemed as if it was an event of the evening before, although twenty years had rolled away — had made her see, imaged in a decanter of water, something monstrous, a death-machine awful and unknown, and at the base of the machine a rolling head, detached from the body, which was none other than her own.

She recollected that when Madame Lebrun painted a charming portrait of her as a young wife, beautiful and

even happy, she gave to her—inadvertently, no doubt, but the presentiment was terrible—the attitude of Madame Henrietta of England, wife of Charles the First.

She recalled the day when for the first time she entered Versailles,—how, as she descended from her carriage, and set her foot on the funereal pavement of the Marble Court,—which now, on the evening previous, she had seen red with blood,—a tremendous thunder-clap was heard, preceded by a flash of lightning, which furrowed the sky in such a frightful fashion that Marshal Richelieu, who was not easily frightened, shook his head and said: “A bad precedent!”

As she remembered all these things there seemed to rise before her eyes a reddish vapor, which grew thicker and thicker.

The darkness became so apparent that the Queen raised her eyes as far as the candelabra, and perceived that one of the candles had gone out, without any apparent reason.

She shuddered. The candle yet smoked, and nothing indicated the cause of its extinction.

As she looked with astonishment at the candelabra, it seemed to her that the neighboring candle grew slowly paler, and that little by little the white flame turned red and the red became blue. Then the flame grew thinner and elongated itself. Then it seemed to quit the wick and fly away. Finally it wavered an instant, as if agitated by an invisible breath, and then died.

The Queen watched with haggard looks the struggles of that candle. Her bosom heaved more and more. With outstretched hands she drew nearer to the candelabra, in proportion as the light grew fainter. Finally, when it was entirely extinguished, she shut her eyes,

sank back into her armchair, and passed her hands over her forehead, which she found raining perspiration.

She remained thus ten minutes or more, with closed eyes; and when she opened them again, she saw with affright that the third candle was beginning to change, like the first two.

Marie Antoinette at first believed that this was a dream, and that she was under the weight of some fatal hallucination. She tried to rise, but it seemed to her that she was chained to her armchair. She tried to summon Madame Royale, whom ten minutes ago she would not have aroused for a second crown; but her voice was suffocated in her throat. She tried to turn away her head, but her gaze remained steadfast and immovable, as if that third dying candle absorbed her sight and her breath. At last, even as the second had changed color, the third also took on different tints, paled, lengthened itself, waved from left to right and then from right to left, and then was extinguished. Fright drove the Queen to such an effort that her voice returned to her, and with its aid she tried to regain the courage which failed her.

"I am not worried," she exclaimed aloud, "at what has happened to the three candles; but if the fourth should go out like the other three, woe, woe is me!"

Suddenly, without the warnings which the others had given, without the flame's changing color, without its appearing to grow longer, without its wavering, but as if touched by the wing of a passing bird, the fourth candle expired.

The Queen sent forth an awful cry, arose, turned twice around, beating the air and the obscurity with her arms, and then fell senseless.

Almost simultaneously with the noise of her body

striking the floor, the door opened, and Andrée, clad in a cambric dressing-gown, appeared on the threshold, white and silent as a ghost.

As she paused an instant amidst the darkness, she fancied she could see a kind of vapor. She listened, as if she heard the air agitated with the sweep of a shroud.

Lowering her eyes she perceived the prostrate Queen, collapsed and unconscious.

She took a step backward, as if her first impulse was to withdraw ; but immediately controlling herself, without speaking a word, without asking the Queen (and, as for that, any question would have been absolutely useless) what was the matter, she lifted her in her arms, and, with a force of which one would have believed her incapable, carried her to the bed, — guided solely by the two candles burning in her own chamber, whose rays strayed through the door into the Queen's chamber.

Then taking from her pouch a vial of salts, she held it to the nostrils of Marie Antoinette.

Despite the efficacy of the salts, the swoon of Marie Antoinette was so deep that it was only at the end of ten minutes that she heaved a sigh.

At this sigh, which announced the return of her sovereign to life, Andrée was again tempted to withdraw ; but this time, as before, she was detained by the sentiment of duty, so powerful in her.

She only withdrew her arm from beneath the head of Marie Antoinette, which she had lifted, lest a drop of the corrosive vinegar, in which the salts were dissolved, should fall on the face or breast of the Queen. At the same time she withdrew the hand which held the vial. The head fell back on the pillow ; and, the vial being withdrawn, the Queen was plunged into a stupor more

profound than that from which she had seemed about to emerge.

Always cool, almost immovable, Andrée lifted her again, and for the second time applied the vial of salts, which produced its effect.

A slight shiver ran through the Queen's body. She sighed, and her eyes opened. She recalled her thoughts, remembering the horrible omen. Then, realizing that a woman was near, she threw both arms about her neck, crying, "Oh defend me, save me!"

"Your Majesty has no need of defence, being in the midst of friends," responded Andrée, "and appears to be already saved from the swoon into which she had fallen."

"The Comtesse de Charny!" cried the Queen, releasing Andrée, whom she had embraced, and whom, in the first movement, she almost repulsed.

Neither this motion, nor the sentiment which inspired it, could escape Andrée's notice.

But the next moment she remained calm, almost to frigidity. Then she asked, taking a backward step: "Does the Queen bid me assist her in undressing?"

"No, Countess, I thank you," replied the Queen in an altered voice; "I can undress alone. Return to your own room, for you must need sleep."

"I will return to my chamber, but not to sleep, Madame," responded Andrée, "but to watch over the sleep of your Majesty."

Having saluted the Queen she retired to her room, with a step as slow and solemn as that of a statue, if statues could walk.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ROAD TO PARIS.

ON the same evening when the events took place which we have just related, an occurrence no less grave disturbed the college of Abbé Fortier.

Sebastien Gilbert had disappeared about six o'clock; and at midnight, despite careful researches throughout the mansion, both by the Abbé Fortier and his sister, Mademoiselle Alexandrine Fortier, he had not been found.

All the domestic world was asked what had become of him, but all that world was ignorant; only Aunt Angelica, as she was going out of the church, where she had been arranging the chairs, at about eight o'clock in the evening, thought she had seen him pass through the little street running between the church and the prison, and take the path leading to that portion of the park called the Parterre.

This report, instead of reassuring the Abbé Fortier, increased his anxiety. He was not ignorant of the strange hallucinations which occasionally possessed Sebastien, especially when that woman appeared whom he called his mother; and more than once in their walks, when the Abbé anticipated this sort of dizziness, he had watched the child as he saw him venture too far into the woods; and when he feared to see the boy disappear altogether, had sent after him one of the best runners in the college.

The runners always found the boy panting, almost exhausted, leaning against a tree, or lying at length on the moss, the green carpet of this magnificent forest ; but these dizzy turns had never seized Sebastien in the evening, and never during the night had they been obliged to run after him.

Something extraordinary must have happened ; but the Abbé Fortier, however much he might scratch his head, could not imagine what.

In order to reach a happier result than the Abbé Fortier, suppose we follow Sebastien Gilbert, — we, who know his whereabouts.

Aunt Angelica was not mistaken. It was certainly Sebastien Gilbert whom she saw slipping by in the twilight, and making, with all his legs, for the Parterre. From the Parterre he went to the Pheasant Park. Passing through the Pheasant Park he shot away through the little lane which leads straight to Haramont. In three-quarters of an hour he reached that village.

Knowing the end of Sebastien's course to be the village of Haramont, it is not difficult for us to guess whom he sought in that village. He came to find Pitou.

Unfortunately Pitou left by one side of the village just as Sebastien Gilbert entered it by the other ; for Pitou, it may be remembered, after the festival given by the Haramont National Guard, — having, like an ancient wrestler, managed to stand upright when all the others were floored, — started to search for Catherine, whom, it may also be remembered, he found fainting on the road from Villers Cotterets to Pisseleu, and destitute of all warmth, except that of the last kiss given her by Isidore.

Gilbert was ignorant of all this, and went straight to Pitou's cottage, the door of which he found unfastened.

In the simplicity of his life Pitou did not fancy there was any necessity for fastening a door, whether the house was occupied or not. Moreover, if it had been his habit scrupulously to secure his door, on this particular evening he was so occupied with weighty matters, that he would certainly have forgotten to take this precaution.

Sebastien was as well acquainted with Pitou's lodgings as with his own. He searched for flintstone and punk, found the knife which served Pitou for a steel, lighted the punk, with it lighted a candle, and then waited; but Sebastien was too excited to wait patiently, especially if he had to wait a long time.

He walked repeatedly from the fireplace to the door, from the door to the corner of the street. Then, like Sister Anne, in the Bluebeard story, seeing nobody coming, he returned to the house, to assure himself that Pitou had not returned in his absence.

Finally, seeing how time was slipping away, he went to the rickety table, where there were ink, quills, and some paper. On the first page of the paper were inscribed the full names and ages of thirty-three men, forming the effective force of the National Guard of Haramont, acting under the orders of Pitou.

Sebastien lifted carefully this top sheet, a model of the commander's chirography, who did not blush, when the task would be better done, to descend sometimes to the subaltern grade of quarter-master.

Then the boy began to write on the next sheet:

MY DEAR PITOU: I have come to tell thee that I overheard, a week ago, a conversation between the Abbé Fortier and the Vicar of Villers Cotterets. It appears that the Abbé Fortier has some understanding with the Parisian aristocrats, and

told the Vicar that a counter revolution was under way at Versailles.

It is the one of which we have since heard, in behalf of the Queen, who put on the black cockade and trod underfoot the tricolored badge.

This menace of a counter-revolution, together with what we have learned of the events which followed the banquet, have already made me very anxious about my father, who, as thou knowest, is the enemy of the nobility ; but this evening, my dear Pitou, there is something much worse.

The Vicar came back to see the Curate ; and as I had fears for my father, I thought it not amiss to listen, especially, after what I had accidentally overheard the other day.

It seems, my dear Pitou, that the populace went out to Versailles, and massacred many persons, and that among those persons was George de Charny.

The Abbé Fortier said : " Let us speak low, so as not to disquiet little Gilbert, whose father went to Versailles, and may possibly have been killed with the others."

Thou understandest well, my dear Pitou, that I did not listen any longer. I glided softly out of my hiding-place, so that nobody heard me. I went through the garden, and found myself on the Place du Château ; and, running all the way, I have come to thee, to ask thee to reconduct me to Paris,—which thou wouldst not fail to do, and with all the heart, if thou wast here.

But as thou art not here, as thou mayest be very late in returning, being probably at work with thy snares in the forest of Villers Cotterets, — in which case thou wilt not come back before daylight, — my anxiety is so great that I cannot wait till then.

I depart, therefore, all alone. Be easy, for I know the road. Besides, of the money my father gave me, I still have left two louis, and I will take a place in the first coach which I run across on the journey.

P. S. I have made my letter rather long, in order to explain the cause of my departure, — and also because of a constant hope that thou wouldst return before it was finished.

It is finished; thou hast not returned, and I go. Adieu, or rather, *Au revoir*. If nothing has happened to my father, and if he runs into no danger, I shall return.

Anyhow, I have fully decided to insist that he should keep me close to himself.

Make the Abbé Fortier easy about my departure; but, above all, do not set his mind at rest before to-morrow, in order that it may be too late to send anybody after me.

Decidedly thou art not coming, and I depart. Adieu, or rather, *Au revoir*.

Thereupon Sebastien Gilbert, who knew the economy of his friend Pitou, extinguished the candle, shut the door, and went his way.

To say that Sebastien Gilbert was not excited, in beginning so long a journey at night, would be untrue; but his emotion was not what it would have been in another child,—fear. It was solely and simply the natural sentiment of the deed he undertook, which was in disobedience to his father's orders, but was at the same time a great proof of his filial affection; and such disobedience has a right to forgiveness from any father.

Besides, Sebastien had grown apace since we last took note of him. A little pale, a little frail, a little nervous for his age, Sebastien was nearly fifteen years old. At that age, with the temperament of Sebastien, especially as the son of Gilbert and Andrée, a boy should be almost a man.

The young fellow, with no other sentiment than the emotion inseparable from the task which he had undertaken, set out for Largny, which he soon discovered by the "pale light which falleth from the stars," as old Corneille puts it. He passed along the village, reached the great ravine which extends thence to Vauciennes, encompassing the ponds of Value. At Vauciennes he

took the broad road, and walked along more tranquilly, knowing that he was in the King's highway.

Sebastien was a boy full of sense. He had once talked Latin all the way from Paris to Villers Cotterets, and it had taken three days to make the trip; and he understood therefore that one could not return to Paris in a night, and did not waste his breath by talking in any language. He descended the first and mounted the second hill of Vauciennes at a moderate pace, but having reached the plain below he marched along more rapidly.

Perhaps this liveliness in Sebastien's gait was incited by his approaching a disagreeable place which intervened along this road, a place which, at that day, had a reputation it has now completely lost. This place was called Clear Water Spring, because the limpid stream trickled twenty feet from quarries like two gates of hell, opening their sombre jaws towards the highway.

Whether Sebastien was timid about passing this point or not no one will ever know, for he did not quicken his footsteps, nor did he swerve from the middle of the road, although he might have gone round by the opposite side of the way. To be sure he slackened his pace further on, but that was doubtless because he came to a slight elevation, and was near the spot where the road divided into two, branching towards Paris and Crespy.

There he suddenly stopped. In coming from Paris he had not noted which route he took at this point, and so, in returning to Paris, he did not know which road he ought to follow.

Was it the left, or was it the right? Both roads were bordered with similar trees, both were paved in the same way. Nobody was there to answer Sebastien's questions.

These two roads, starting from the same point, diverged from each other visibly and rapidly, so that if Sebastien

took the wrong direction, instead of the right, the result would be, that by next morning he would be very much out of his way.

Sebastien stood undecided. He looked for some indication by which he might recognize the route by which he had formerly travelled ; but this indication, which would have failed him even in the daytime, failed him still more in the obscurity.

He sat down discouraged at the fork of the roads, partly for rest, and partly for reflection, when suddenly he thought he heard in the distance, coming from the direction of Villers Cotterets, the gallop of one or two horses.

He bent his ear to listen. He was not in error. The noise of the horses' hoofs resounded above the roadbed, and became more and more distinct. Sebastien was about to receive the help which he needed.

He determined to stop the riders midway and ask for directions. Soon he saw their shadows loom up in the darkness, while sparks of fire spurted from beneath the iron feet of the horses. He raised himself, crossed the trench, and waited.

The cavalcade was composed of two men, one of whom galloped three or four paces in front of the other.

Sebastien reasonably concluded that the first of the two men must be the master, the second the servant. He advanced three steps, in order to address the first rider. The latter, seeing a man leap as it were from the ditch, believed there was an ambuscade, and put his hand to his belt.

Sebastien noticed the movement, and called out : "I am no thief, Monsieur. I am a boy whom the last news from Versailles summons to Paris, to search for his father. I don't know which of these two roads I ought to take.

Tell me which leads to Paris, and you will do me a great favor."

The clearness of Sebastien's words and the juvenile ring of his voice (which sounded not unfamiliar to the horseman) were such that, hurried as he was, he drew rein.

"My boy," he asked kindly, "who are you, and why do you venture on the highroad at such an hour, alone and unprotected?"

"I do not ask who *you* are, Monsieur; I only ask my way, the road at the end of which I may learn if my father is dead or living."

There was in that voice, though still childish, a firmness of accent which struck the cavalier.

"My friend," he said, "the road to Paris is the one which we pursue. I know it but badly myself, having travelled this road to Paris but twice; but I am not the less sure the one we follow is the best one."

Sebastien took a backward step in expressing his thanks. The horses needing to breathe, the horseman who seemed to be the master resumed his course, but at a less rapid pace. His lackey followed him. "Monsieur Isidore," he said, "did you not recognize that youngster?"

"No, but it seemed to me somehow —"

"What, Monsieur Isidore did not recognize young Sebastien Gilbert, who belongs at the boarding-school of the Abbé Fortier?"

"Sebastien Gilbert?"

"To be sure, — who came from time to time, with that big Pitou, to Mademoiselle Catherine's farm."

"Thou art indeed right!"

Stopping his horse and turning around he asked: "Is it indeed you, Sebastien?"

"Yes, Monsieur Isidore," answered the lad, who had already recognized the cavalier.

"Come then, my young friend," said the horseman, "let me know how it happens that I find you alone on such a road, at such an hour."

"I *have* told you, Monsieur Isidore. I go to Paris, to ascertain if my father has been killed, or if he still lives."

"Alas, poor boy," said Isidore, with a deep feeling of sadness, "I go to Paris for a similar cause ; only I am not in doubt."

"Yes, I know, — your brother — ?"

"One of my brothers, George, was killed yesterday morning at Versailles."

"Ah, Monsieur George de Charny !"

Sebastien made a forward movement and offered both his hands to Isidore, who caught and pressed them.

"Well, my dear boy," he added, "as our situations are almost identical, it is useless for us to separate. Like myself you must be in haste to reach Paris."

"Yes, yes, Monsieur !"

"You can't go afoot !"

"I could go on foot very well, but it would take too long ; so I expect to-morrow to pay for a place in the first vehicle I find on the road, going in the same direction as myself, and to travel in it as far as I can towards Paris."

"And if you do not find one — ?"

"I shall proceed on foot."

"Do better than that, my dear boy ; mount on the crupper behind my lackey."

Sebastien withdrew his hands from those of Isidore, and said : "I thank you, Monsieur le Vicomte."

These words were accentuated by a tone so expressive

that Isidore saw how he had wounded the lad by offering him a lift behind a servant; so he added: "On the whole, come to think of it, take Baptiste's horse, and he can rejoin us at Paris. He can inquire for me at the Tuileries, where they will always know of my whereabouts."

"I thank you still more, Monsieur," said Sebastien in a softer voice, for he appreciated the delicacy of this new proposition, "but I will not deprive you of Baptiste's services."

Only a little more persuasion was needed, the preliminaries of peace being already arranged.

"Well, you may do still better, Sebastien. Mount behind me. Day is already breaking. At ten in the forenoon we shall be at Dammartin, — that is, half way. There we will leave the two horses in Baptiste's care, and take a postchaise, which will land us in Paris. That is what I intended to do, and you do not alter my plans."

"Is that really true, Monsieur Isidore?"

"On my word of honor."

"Well then —," said the lad hesitating, but dying to accept.

"Get down, Baptiste, and help Monsieur to mount!"

"Thanks, but that is needless, Monsieur Isidore," said Sebastien, who, agile as any schoolboy, climbed, or rather bounded, to the crupper.

Then the three men and the two horses started at a gallop, and soon disappeared behind the hill of Gondreville.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE APPARITION.

As had been planned, the three riders continued their journey as far as Dammartin. They arrived at Dammartin about ten o'clock. They all needed something to eat; and besides, it was necessary to inquire for a chaise and posthorses.

While breakfast was served to Isidore and Sebastien, who did not exchange a word, being a prey, Sebastien to anxiety and Isidore to melancholy, Baptiste cleaned his master's horses, and tried to find a chaise and posthorses.

At midday, breakfast being over, the horses and chaise were ready at the door.

As Isidore had heretofore used his own vehicle when he travelled by post, he was not aware that those who travel with carriages belonging to the company were compelled to change conveyances at each stopping-place. The result of this was that the relay-masters — who kept others strictly to the rules, though they refrained carefully from observing those rules themselves — never had vehicles under their control or horses in their stables. Consequently, leaving Dammartin at noon, the travellers did not reach the barrier till half-past four, and were not at the gates of the Tuileries till five o'clock in the evening.

There it was still further necessary to make themselves known to Lafayette, who controlled the guards, and who, in these troublous times, having made himself

responsible to the Assembly for the person of the King, guarded that King conscientiously. However when Charny gave his name, when he invoked the name of his brother, the obstacles vanished, and Isidore and Sebastien were introduced into the Courtyard of the Swiss Guards, whence they passed into the Middle Courtyard.

Sebastien wished to be instantly conducted as far as the Rue Saint Honoré, to the lodging which his father inhabited; but Isidore bade him remember that as Doctor Gilbert was a physician to the King for that quarter, those about the King would best know when he was expected. Sebastien, whose disposition was thoroughly reasonable, yielded to this argument, and consequently followed Isidore.

A certain kind of etiquette was already established in the Palace of the Tuileries, although the Court had arrived only the night before. Isidore was conducted by the Staircase of Honor, and the usher made him wait in the great salon hung with green, feebly lighted by two candelabras.

The rest of the palace was plunged in semi-darkness; for the building having been generally occupied by private persons, the great lamps, which constituted part of the royal luxury, had been neglected.

The usher at once went to inquire for the Comte de Charny and Doctor Gilbert. The boy seated himself on a sofa. Isidore walked up and down with long strides.

At the end of ten minutes the usher reappeared. The Comte de Charny was with the Queen. As to Doctor Gilbert, he was not yet visible. It was supposed, though no one had power to speak positively, that he was with the King, — the King being closeted, as the valet de chambre on duty said, with his physician; only as the King had four physicians for each term, besides his regu-

lar physician, no one knew precisely if the gentleman closeted with his Majesty was Monsieur Gilbert. If it was he, they would notify him, when he came forth, that somebody waited for him in the Queen's antechamber.

Sebastien breathed freely. He had no longer any reason to fear. His father lived, and was unhurt and safe. He ran to thank Isidore for having brought him hither. Isidore embraced him tearfully. The thought that Sebastien had found his father rendered more dear to himself the brother he had lost, and should never see again.

At that moment the door opened. An usher cried : "Monsieur le Vicomte de Charny."

"That is I," responded Isidore, coming forward.

"Monsieur le Vicomte is summoned to the Queen," said the deferential usher.

"You will wait for me, will you not," said Isidore to Sebastien, "at least, unless Monsieur Gilbert sends for you ? Bear in mind that I must account for you to your father."

"Yes, Monsieur," said Sebastien, "and meanwhile receive my fresh acknowledgments."

Isidore followed the usher, and the door closed.

Then, tranquil about his father, tranquil about himself, certain that he should be pardoned by the Doctor, on account of his intentions, his thoughts reverted to the Abbé Fortier and to Pitou, and to the worryment he had caused them, to the one by his flight, to the other by his letter.

He could not comprehend now, with all the hindrances he had encountered on the road, how it was that Pitou — who need only stretch his long legs to travel as fast as a posthorse — had not overtaken them.

Naturally, by a simple connection of ideas, in thinking

about Pitou he thought about his usual surroundings, — that is, the big trees, the beautiful shaded paths, the bluish distances which marked the horizon of the forest. Then, by a gradual process, he recalled the strange visions which sometimes had appeared to him beneath the great trees, in the depth of their immense arches.

He thought of the woman whom he had several times seen in his dreams, and once — at least, so he believed — in reality, on the day when he was walking in the woods at Satory, and this woman passed and vanished like mist, drawn in a magnificent calèche, by two superb horses at full gallop.

He recalled the emotion which the sight of her always roused in him, and, half dreaming, he murmured in a low voice: "My mother, my mother, my mother!"

Suddenly the door, which had been closed behind Isidore de Charny, was again opened. This time it was a woman who appeared. By chance the boy's eyes were fixed on that door at the moment of this apparition.

This vision was so much in harmony with what was passing in his thoughts, that, on seeing his dream become animate in a veritable form, the boy trembled; but it was quite a different matter when the woman entered, and he saw, both at once, the shadow and the reality, — the shadow of his dreams, the reality of Satory.

He suddenly stood upright, as if a spring had placed him on his feet. His lips opened, his eyes grew larger, his pupils dilated. His palpitating breast tried vainly to form a sound.

The woman moved along, proud, majestic, disdainful, without noticing him in the least. Calm as this woman seemed outwardly, her contracted eyebrows, pale color, and stifled respiration showed her to be laboring under the pressure of great nervous irritation.

She crossed the hall diagonally, opened a door opposite to that by which she entered, and withdrew into the corridor.

Sebastien realized that she would escape him if he did not hasten. As if to be sure of the reality of her appearance, he stared wildly at the door by which she had entered and the door by which she had disappeared, and then hurried after her, before the skirt of her silken robe had vanished around the angle of the corridor; but hearing some one behind she walked more quickly, as if she dreaded pursuit.

Sebastien hastened his steps more than she was able to do. The corridor was dark, and he feared lest the dear vision should again fly from him.

Hearing footsteps fast overtaking her, she quickened her pace, but turned her head. Sebastien uttered a feeble cry of joy. It was *she*, always *she*.

The woman, on her side, seeing herself pursued by a lad with extended arms, but understanding nothing of the reason for it, and having reached the top of a staircase, began to descend; but hardly had she taken a single step when Sebastien appeared in his turn at the end of the corridor, crying, "Madame, Madame!"

This voice roused a strange sensation throughout the whole being of that young woman. It seemed to her as if a blow, half mournful half charming, was smiting her heart; and that from her heart there radiated a chill throughout her body, running through all her veins; but understanding as yet nothing, either of the appeal or the emotion which it aroused, she redoubled her pace, till her walk became almost a flight; but she was not far enough in advance of the lad to elude him. They reached the bottom of the stairway almost at the same time.

The young woman darted into the courtyard. A car-
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riage was in waiting, and a servant held open the door of that carriage. She entered rapidly, and seated herself; but before the door was shut Sebastien glided between the servant and the carriage, and having seized the bottom of the fugitive's robe, kissed it passionately, again exclaiming, "Oh Madame, Madame!"

The young woman then looked at the charming boy, who had previously so frightened her, and said in a softer voice than was habitual with her, although that voice still betrayed a mixture of emotion and fear: "Well, my friend, why do you run after me? Why do you call me? Who are you?"

"I want," said the boy, all of a tremble, "I want to see you, I want to embrace you;" and then he added, so low that only the young woman could hear him: "I want to call you *my mother!*"

The young woman uttered a cry, took the head of the boy between her hands, and, as if moved by a sudden revelation, drew him quickly to herself, and pressed her lips ardently upon his forehead.

Then, as if fearing that she might be robbed of the child she had found, she drew him entirely into the carriage, placed him on the other side, shut the door, and pulled down the window, which she immediately raised again to say: "Home, to the Rue Coq Heron, number nine, at the first coachway opening from the Rue Plâtrière."

Then, turning towards the child, "Thy name?" she demanded.

"Sebastien!"

"Ah, come here, Sebastien, — here to my heart."

Then sinking back, as if almost fainting, she murmured: "Oh, what is this unknown sensation? Is it what they call *happiness?*"

CHAPTER IX.

ANDRÉE'S PAVILION.

THE drive was far enough for only one long mutual kiss between mother and son.

Behold this child, for her heart never for an instant doubted that he belonged to her, this child, who had been snatched away from her one terrible night, a night of anguish and dishonor ; this child, who had disappeared without any trace of his abductor, except a footstep imprinted on the snow ; this child, whom she had so detested and even cursed, that his first cry she had not heard, his first wail she had not enjoyed ; this child, for whom she had appealed, searched, whom she had repeatedly demanded, whom her brother had pursued across the ocean, in the person of Gilbert ; this child, whom she had mourned for fifteen years, whom she had despaired of ever seeing again, of whom she had dreamed only as a vision of the beloved dead, as a cherished spirit, — behold this child, suddenly, at a moment when she least expected it, recovered by a miracle. By a miracle he recognized her, ran after her in his turn, — pursued her, called her his mother ; this child, here he was, held to her heart, pressed to her breast. Here was one who, never having seen her, yet loved her with filial affection, as she loved him with affection maternal. Here, from his lips, pure from other kisses, she regained the joys of a lost life in the first embrace which she gave her child.

Above the heads of men there was, then, something more than the empty void wherein circled the worlds, there was something besides chance and fatality.

"Rue Coq Heron, number nine, at the first coachway after leaving the Rue Plâtrière," the Countess had said.

Strange coincidence, which brought this child, after a lapse of fourteen years, to the very house where he was born, where he had inhaled the first breath of life, whence he had been stolen by his father.

This little mansion, bought formerly by the senior Taverney, when some wealth had come into the bosom of his family, through the favor with which the Queen honored him, had been preserved by Philippe de Taverney, and was cared for by an old concierge, whom the ancient proprietors had apparently sold with the house. It served as a resting-place for the young man, when he returned from his travels, or for the young woman, when she wished to sleep in Paris.

After the last scene between Andrée and the Queen, after the night spent near her, Andrée was resolved to withdraw from her rival, who recalled all her sorrows, — from one in whose presence the misfortunes of the Queen, great though they were, seemed always less than the anguish of the woman.

Therefore in the morning Andrée had sent a servant to the little mansion in the Rue Coq Heron, with orders to put the summer-house in order, — the pavilion, — which consisted, as she remembered, of an antechamber, a small eating-room, a parlor, and a bedroom.

Formerly Andrée had used the parlor as a second bedroom, in order to have Nicole near her; but since that was no longer necessary, each room had been restored to its original purpose, and the chambermaid, leaving the

lower story entirely to her mistress, — who came there rarely, and always alone, — had to accommodate herself with a small attic, under the eaves.

Andrée excused herself to the Queen for not keeping the adjacent chamber, on the ground that the Queen was lodged in such narrow quarters that she needed to have near her one of the Ladies of her Chamber, rather than one who was not particularly detailed for her royal service.

The Queen did not insist upon retaining Andrée, or rather she urged it no more than strict conventionality required; and towards four o'clock in the afternoon, when Andrée's woman came to say that the pavilion was in readiness, she gave orders for the chambermaid to go at once to Versailles, collect the belongings which, in their precipitate departure, had been left in the apartment of the chateau which Andrée occupied, and bring them on the morrow to the Rue Coq Heron.

At five o'clock, consequently, the Comtesse de Charny quitted the Tuileries, regarding as a sufficient farewell the few words she had spoken to the Queen in the morning, when Andrée placed at her disposal the chamber she had occupied over night.

It was on leaving the Queen, or rather the chamber adjoining the Queen's, that she crossed the Green Salon, where Sebastien was waiting, — when, followed by him, she fled through the corridors, till Sebastien threw himself into the cab, which, ordered in advance by the chambermaid, was in waiting at the door of the Tuileries, in the Courtyard of Princes.

Thus everything combined to make that evening a happy one for Andrée. Instead of her chamber at the Tuileries, or her suite at Versailles, wherein she could have received her child so miraculously restored, but where she could hardly have opened the floodgates of her

maternal affection, she was in a mansion by herself, in an isolated summer-house, without a lackey, without even a chambermaid, without a single onlooker or eavesdropper.

It was therefore with a well-felt expression of joy that she gave the address written above, and which has furnished material for this digression.

Six o'clock sounded as the coachway was opened, at the summons of the driver, and the cab stopped in front of the pavilion.

Andrée did not wait for the driver to leave his seat. She opened the door, and alighted at one step, drawing Sebastien with her.

Then, giving the coachman a piece of money nearly double his due, she hurried, still holding the boy by the hand, into the interior of the pavilion, after carefully closing the door of the antechamber.

In the parlor she paused. This parlor was illuminated solely by the fire burning in the grate, and two lighted candles on the mantelpiece.

Andrée placed her son on a small lounge, where were concentrated the united light of both fire and candles.

Then, with an expression of joy in which a little doubt still trembled, she exclaimed: "Oh my child, my child, is it indeed thou?"

"My mother!" responded Sebastien, with an expansion of his heart, which unfolded like a dewy rose, against the beating heart and feverish breast of Andrée.

"And here, here!" cried Andrée, gazing about her, — finding herself in the same parlor where she had given the day to Sebastien, and turning her eyes with terror towards the very chamber from which he had been abducted.

"Here?" repeated Sebastien; "what does that mean, my mother?"

"That means, my child, that here, fifteen years ago, thou wast born, in this very room where we now are ; and I bless the mercy of the all-powerful Lord, which, at the end of fifteen years, has miraculously brought thee back again."

"Oh yes, miraculously," said Sebastien ; "for if I had not feared for the life of my father, I should not have started alone and at night for Paris ; if I had not come alone and at night, I should not have been puzzled to know which of two roads to take, I should not have paused on the great highway, I should not have questioned Monsieur Isidore de Charny as he rode by, — he would not have recognized me, nor offered to bring me to Paris with him, nor have taken me to the Palace of the Tuileries. Moreover I should not have seen you, when you crossed the Green Salon ; I should not have recognized you ; I should not have run after you ; I should not have overtaken you ; I should not have been able to call you *mother*, — that word which is so sweet and tender to pronounce."

At those words of Sebastien, "If I had not feared for the life of my father," Andrée felt a sharp pain in her heart, closed her eyes, and threw back her head.

At those other words, "Monsieur Isidore de Charny would not have recognized me, nor offered to bring me to Paris with him, nor taken me to the Palace of the Tuileries," her eyes reopened, her heart was relieved, her glance rose thankfully to Heaven ; for it was indeed a miracle which led to the restoration of Sebastien through a brother of her husband.

Finally, the words "I should not have called you *mother*, a word so sweet and tender to pronounce," recalled her to emotions of happiness, and she pressed Sebastien renewedly to her breast.

"Yes, yes, thou art right, my child," said she, "very sweet! There is indeed only one word sweeter or tenderer, — that which I speak in pressing thee to my heart, *my son, my son.*"

There was an instant of silence, during which could only be heard the soft contact of the maternal lips on the face of her child.

At last Andrée suddenly exclaimed: "It is not fair that everything about me and around me should remain so mysterious. Thou hast well explained thy presence there, but thou hast not explained thy recognition of me, thy race after me, why thou didst call me thy mother."

"Can I tell you?" asked Sebastien, regarding Andrée with an indescribable expression of love. "I scarcely know myself. You talk of mysteries. All is as mysterious to me as to you."

"But somebody said to thee, as I passed by, *Child, behold thy mother — ?*"

"Yes, my heart!"

"Thy heart?"

"Listen, my mother! I wish to tell you something strange."

Andrée drew near the child, at the same time looking up to Heaven, as if to thank God that, in restoring her child to her, He had restored him in such a way.

"It is ten years since I first knew you, my mother."

Andrée trembled.

"You do not understand?"

Andrée shook her head.

"Let me tell you. I often used to have strange dreams, which my father called hallucinations."

At the allusion to Gilbert from the lips of her child, piercing her heart like a steel shaft, Andrée shivered.

"Twenty times since then have I seen you, my mother."

"How so?"

"In the dreams of which I spoke just now."

Andrée thought of the awful dreams which had agitated her own life, and of one to which this child owed its birth.

"You see, my mother," continued Sebastien, "that when I was a child, when I played with the village children, and while I remained in the village, my impressions were like those of other children, and I saw nothing except real and palpable things; but as soon as I quitted the village, as soon as I left its last garden behind me, as soon as I crossed the fringe of the forest, I felt the rustle of a gown pass by me. I stretched out my hands to grasp it, but I grasped only the air. Then the phantom moved away. Invisible though it was at first, it became visible little by little. At the beginning it was only vapor, transparent as a cloud, resembling that wherein Virgil enwraps the mother of Æneas, when she appears to her son on the shore at Carthage. Soon this vapor intensified, and took on the human form. This human form, which was that of a woman, glided along the surface instead of walking on the earth. Then an unknown power, strange and irresistible, drew me after her. She beckoned me into the darkest recesses of the forest, and I followed with extended arms, but mute as herself; for when I tried to speak, my voice would not articulate a sound; and thus I pursued her, without her pausing, without being able to overtake her, till the power which had announced her presence to me gave the signal for her disappearance. Then the phantom vanished little by little; but she seemed to suffer like myself, because Heaven's will separated us from each other; for she vanished gazing at me, while I, overcome by fatigue, when no longer sustained by her presence, fell headlong where I last saw her."

This double existence of Sebastien's, this lively dream, too much resembled those which had come to Andrée, for her not to recognize herself in her child.

"Poor boy," she said, pressing him to her heart, "it was indeed in vain that hate separated thee from me. God was bringing us together, without my suspecting it. Only, less happy than thyself, my dear child, I saw thee neither in dream nor in reality; although, when I passed by thee in the Green Salon, a shudder seized me. When I heard thy steps behind me, something like vertigo shot through my heart and soul; when thou calledst me *madame*, that somewhat arrested my attention; but when thou saidst *mother*, I almost fainted; at thy touch, I knew thee."

"My mother, my mother, my mother!" thrice repeated Sebastien, as if he would console Andrée for not having heard this sweet name pronounced for so long a time.

"Yes, yes, thy mother," replied the young woman, with a transport of affection impossible to describe.

"And now that we are at last together," said the lad, "since thou art glad and happy to know me, we will not leave each other again, shall we?"

Andrée trembled. She had seized the present in its flight, closing her eyes halfway to the past, and entirely to the future.

"My poor child," she murmured with a sigh, "how I should bless thee if thou couldst work such a miracle."

"Leave it to me," replied Sebastien, "I will arrange it all."

"How?" asked Andrée.

"I do not know the causes which have separated thee from my father?"

Andrée grew pale.

"But," resumed Sebastien, "however grave the causes, they will disappear before my prayers and even my tears."

Andrée shook her head. "Never, never," she said.

"Listen!" said Sebastien, — who after the words which Gilbert had once spoken to him, *Child, never speak to me of thy mother*, had always believed that the blame of the separation lay with her, — "Listen, my father adores me."

Andrée's hands, which held those of her son, loosened. The boy appeared not to notice this, and probably did not. He continued: "I will prepare him to see thee. I will tell him how happy thou hast made me. Then some day I will take thee by the hand, I will lead thee to him, and I will say: *She is here. See, my father, how beautiful she is.*"

Andrée repulsed Sebastien and raised herself.

The lad looked at her in astonishment. She was so pale that he feared her.

"Never," she repeated, "never!" and this time her voice expressed more than tremor; it expressed a threat.

In his turn the boy recoiled on the sofa. He began to discover in the face of this woman those dreadful lines which Raphael assigns to angels in anger.

"And why," demanded he in a disappointed tone, "why dost thou refuse to see my father?"

At these words, as with the shock of two clouds meeting in a tempest, the thunder burst forth. "Why?" said Andrée, "thou askest, *why*? Indeed, my poor child, thou knowest nothing."

"Yes," replied Sebastien firmly, "I ask *why*."

"Well," responded Andrée, quite incapable of longer

suppressing the fangs of the hateful serpent raging in her heart, "because thy father is a wretch, because he is infamous."

Sebastien bounded from the seat on which he was crouching, and stood in front of Andrée.

"Is it my father of whom you are speaking, Madame, of my father," he cried, "of Doctor Gilbert, of the man who has reared me, to whom I owe everything, with whom alone I am acquainted? I was mistaken, Madame, you are *not* my mother."

The boy made a motion as if to leave the room. Andrée stopped him.

"Listen!" said she. "Thou dost not know, thou canst not understand, thou must not judge!"

"No, but I can feel; and I feel that I do not love you any longer."

Andrée uttered a cry of distress; but at the same time a noise outside diverted the emotion which convulsed her, although that emotion had threatened to completely overwhelm her.

This noise was the opening of the outer gate, and of a carriage which stopped at the entrance. At this sound a chill ran through Andrée's limbs, a chill which passed from her body into that of her child. "Listen!" she said, "listen, and hold thy tongue!"

The conquered boy obeyed.

The door of the antechamber was heard to open and steps were heard approaching the parlor.

Andrée remained immovable and mute, pale as the statue of Expectancy, her eyes fixed on the door.

"Whom shall I announce to Madame?" asked the voice of the old porter.

"Announce the Comte de Charny, and ask if she will do me the honor to receive me."

"Oh!" exclaimed Andrée, "into that bedroom, child, into that bedroom! It will not do for him to see thee. It is not necessary for him to know of thine existence;" and she hurried the scared boy into the inner room.

Closing the door on him she said: "Remain there! When he is gone I will tell thee, I will relate to thee. — No, no! No more of that! I will *embrace* thee, and so thou wilt understand that I am really thy mother."

Sebastien replied only by a sort of moan.

At that moment the door from the antechamber opened. Cap in hand the old concierge delivered the commission with which he was charged. Behind him, in the shadow, Andrée's piercing eye discerned a human form.

"Let the Count enter," she said, in a voice as firm as if nothing had happened.

The old porter stepped aside and the Count, hat in hand, appeared on the threshold.

CHAPTER X.

HUSBAND AND WIFE.

As he was in mourning for his dear brother, killed hardly two days before, the Count was clad in complete black.

Moreover, as this mourning, like Hamlet's, was not alone in his "inky cloak," but in the depths of his heart, his pale face attested the tears he had shed and the grief he had suffered.

The Countess saw all this at one rapid glance. Handsome faces are never so handsome as after a shower of tears. Never had Charny seemed so handsome before.

She closed her eyes for an instant, threw her head slightly backward, as if to give her lungs a chance to breathe better, and held her hand to her heart, which felt as if it would break.

When she reopened her eyes, — and this was but a second after she closed them, — she saw Charny standing in the same place.

The gesture and glance of Andrée asked at the same time, and so visibly, why he did not come in, that he most naturally responded, to both gesture and glance: "Madame, I was waiting."

He took a step forward.

"Do you wish your carriage sent away, Monsieur?" asked the porter, urged to the query by the Count's servant.

An indescribable expression played about the Count's eyes, and conveyed itself to Andrée, who, as if dazzled, closed her eyes again, and remained immovable, with bated breath, as if she had not heard the question, as if she had not seen the look. Both, however, had gone straight to her heart.

Charny vainly sought, from this living statue, for any sign which would indicate to him what he ought to respond. Then, as the tremor which ran over Andrée might as well arise from fear that he would not go away, as from desire for him to remain, he replied : "Tell the coachman to wait."

The door closed ; and, for the first time perhaps since their marriage, the Count and Countess found themselves alone together.

It was the Count who first broke the silence. "Pardon me, Madame," said he, "but is my unexpected presence indiscreet? I am all ready, my carriage is at the door, and I can go away as I came."

"No, Monsieur," said Andrée quickly. "On the contrary, though I knew you to be well and safe, I am not the less happy to see you again, after the events which have recently taken place."

"You have then had the goodness to inquire after me, Madame?" asked the Count.

"Undoubtedly ! Yesterday and this morning I learned that you were at Versailles. This evening they told me that you were with the Queen."

Were these last words innocently spoken, or did they contain a reproach ? It was evident that the Count himself, not knowing how to take them, was puzzled for an instant ; but presently he said : "Madame, a sorrowful and pious duty kept me yesterday and to-day at Versailles. A duty which I also regard as sacred, considering

the situation in which the Queen is placed, led me, as soon as I returned to Paris, to seek her Majesty."

In her turn Andrée obviously tried to grasp, in all its fulness, the meaning of the Count's last words. Then, thinking that at least she ought to make some response to his earlier words, she said : " Yes, Monsieur, yes. I also know the awful loss which " — she hesitated an instant, " which *you* have sustained."

Andrée had been on the point of saying " which *we* have sustained."

She dared not, but continued : " You have had the misfortune to lose *your* brother, Baron George."

One might have supposed that Charny listened for the utterance of the two words we have italicized, for he trembled when each of them was pronounced.

" Yes, Madame," he replied, " it is as you say, a terrible loss to me, the loss of this young man, — a loss which fortunately *you* can not appreciate, having known my poor George so little."

There was a mild and melancholy reproach in his word *fortunately*.

Andrée understood him ; but no outward sign showed that she gave his words a thought.

" For the rest, one thing will console me for this loss, — if I can be consoled," resumed Charny, — " that poor George died — as Isidore will die, as I shall probably die — doing his duty."

These words, *as I shall probably die*, touched Andrée profoundly.

" Alas, Monsieur," she asked, " do you then believe affairs to be so desperate, that there will be need of more blood-stained sacrifices to disarm the celestial wrath ?"

" I believe, Madame, that the knell of kings has already sounded, or at least is about to strike. I believe that its

evil genius drives the monarchy towards an abyss. If it falls therein, I think it should be accompanied, in the rush, by all those who have shared its splendor."

"That is true," said Andrée, "and when that day comes, believe me, Monsieur, like yourself, you will find me ready for all sacrifices."

"Ah Madame," said Charny, "you have given too many proofs of such devotion in the past for any one, whoever he may be, — and myself least of all, — to doubt that devotion in the future; and perhaps I have less reason to question your loyalty than mine, which, mayhap for the first time, recoils from a command of the Queen."

"I do not understand," replied Andrée.

"On arriving at Versailles, Madame, I found an order to present myself at once before her Majesty."

"Oh," said Andrée, smiling sadly. Presently, after an instant of silence, she added: "It is all very simple! Like yourself, the Queen sees that the future is perplexing and troublous, and wishes to reunite about herself men upon whom she can rely."

"You deceive yourself, Madame," responded Charny. "It was not to attach me to herself that the Queen sent for me, but to send me away."

"To send you away?" asked Andrée quickly, taking a step nearer the Count. After a moment, perceiving that the Count was still standing near the doorway, as he had been since the commencement of the conversation, she added: "Pardon, I have kept you standing, Count," and pointed to an armchair.

As she uttered these words, incapable of longer sustaining an upright attitude, she sank upon the sofa, where, only an instant before, she had been seated with Sebastien.

"You are sent away?" she repeated, with an emotion which was not devoid of delight, for she supposed that Charny and the Queen were to be henceforth separated; "and to what end?"

"To fulfil a mission at Turin, to the Comte d'Artois and the Duc de Bourbon, the King's kinsmen, who have quitted France."

"And you have accepted?"

Charny looked fixedly at Andrée, and then said, "No, Madame!"

Andrée grew so pale that Charny took a step towards her, as if to help her; but at this movement of the Count she rallied her strength and was herself again, and stammered: "No? You have said *no* to an order from the Queen, — *you*, Monsieur?" and the last two words were pronounced with an accent of incredulity impossible to set down on paper.

"I responded, Madame, that I believed my presence to be more needful in Paris than at Turin, especially at present; that anybody could fulfil the mission to Turin with which she honored me; that a second brother of mine had but just come from our province, to put himself at the orders of her Majesty, and that he was ready to go in my place."

"And beyond a peradventure, Monsieur, the Queen was happy to accept the substitute?" cried Andrée, with an expression of bitterness she could not withhold, and which did not elude Charny.

"No, Madame, quite the contrary; for my refusal appeared to wound her deeply. I should have been forced to go, but happily the King came in at that moment, and I made him the judge."

"And the King said you were right, Monsieur?" rejoined Andrée, with an ironic smile. "He was of one

mind with yourself, and thought you ought to remain at the Tuileries? Oh how good his Majesty is!"

Charny did not frown at this thrust, but resumed: "The King said, in substance, that he thought my brother Isidore well adapted to that mission, the more so because, coming for the first time to Court, and being for the first time in Paris, his absence would not be remarked; and the King added that it would be cruel for the Queen to insist that I should leave *you* at such a moment."

"*Me*," cried Andrée, "the King spoke of *me*?"

"I but repeat his words, Madame. Then, looking beyond the Queen, and addressing himself to me directly, he asked: 'But really, where is the dear Countess? I have not seen her since yesterday evening.' As the question was addressed especially to myself, it was fitting that I should reply; so I said: 'Sire, I so seldom have the pleasure of seeing Madame de Charny, that it is impossible for me to tell you where the Countess may be at this moment; but if your Majesty wishes to be informed on this subject, and will address himself to the Queen, the Queen doubtless knows, and will answer.' And I insisted the more, because, seeing the frown on the Queen's brow, I fancied that something had taken place between you and herself, of which I was ignorant."

Andrée was so anxious to hear that she did not dream of replying.

Charny continued: "The Queen responded: 'Sire, Madame de Charny left the Tuileries an hour ago.'—'How?' demanded the King, 'the Countess has left the Tuileries?'—'Yes, Sire.'—'But when to return?'—'I cannot guess!'—'You cannot guess, Madame?' replied the King. 'Why, what possible motive had the Countess, your best friend, Madame—?' The Queen made a

gesture. 'Yes,' repeated he, 'I say your best friend, Madame, — for leaving the Tuileries at such a time?' — 'I believe,' said the Queen, 'she found herself badly accommodated.' — 'Badly accommodated, beyond a doubt, if it had been our intention to let her remain in that chamber next to yours; but we would have provided her with a lodging, pardieu, — a lodging for her and also for the Count, should we not, Monsieur? This would not have seemed too difficult a task to you, I hope?' — 'Sire,' I answered, 'the King knows that I hold myself ready to do my duty in any post to which he assigns me, provided the position calls for my service.' — 'Indeed I know it well,' resumed the King. 'So the Countess has gone away! But whither, Madame? Don't you know?' — 'No, Sire, I do not know.' — 'How? Your friend leaves you, and you do not ask whither she is going?' — 'When my friends quit me I leave them free to go where they will, and am not so indiscreet as to ask whither they are bound.' — 'Good! A woman's sulkiness,' said the King to me. 'Count, I have somewhat to say to the Queen. Go and wait in my rooms, and present your brother to me. This evening he shall depart for Turin. I am of your opinion, Charny, I need you, and I shall keep you.' — I went to find my brother, who had just arrived, and who, they told me, was waiting in the Green Salon."

At these words, *in the Green Salon*, Andrée, who had almost forgotten Sebastien, — so much was she interested in the recital of her husband, — bethought herself of all which had taken place between herself and her son, and cast her eyes in agony towards the door of her bedroom, which was closed.

"But pardon me, Madame," said Charny. "I fear I have entertained you with things of little interest to your-

self, and doubtless you are asking how it chances that I am here, and what brings me here."

"No, Monsieur," said Andrée. "On the contrary, what you do me the honor to recount excites my liveliest interest. As to your presence near myself, you know that after the alarms which I have experienced on your account, your presence, which proves that personally no misfortune has happened to you, — your presence cannot be otherwise than agreeable. Continue your story, I beg. The King bade you wait in his apartment, and you had been notified about your brother —"

"We reported ourselves at the King's rooms, Madame. Ten minutes later he returned. As the errand to the Princes was urgent, it was about that the King first spoke. The object was to instruct their Highnesses about the events which are taking place. A quarter-hour after his Majesty's return my brother left for Turin. We remained alone. The King paced the room a moment pensively. Suddenly pausing before me he said: 'My dear Count, do you know what has taken place between the Queen and the Countess?' — 'No, Sire,' I answered. — 'Something must have happened between them,' he added, 'for I found the Queen in an execrable temper, and unjust to the Countess, as it seemed to me, which is not her Majesty's customary attitude towards her friends, whom she defends even when they are in the wrong.' — 'I can only repeat to your Majesty what I have had the honor to say before,' was my reply. 'I am completely ignorant as to what has occurred between the Countess and the Queen, even if anything has taken place between them. In any case, Sire, I dare affirm, in advance, that there is nothing wrong either on one side or the other; and if the Queen has been in any way wronged, the misdeeds are not on the Countess's part.'"

"I thank you, Monsieur," said Andrée, "for judging me so kindly."

Charny bowed and resumed: "The King continued: 'At any rate, if the Queen does not know the whereabouts of the Countess, *you* ought to know.'—I was hardly better informed than the Queen. However, I replied: 'Sire, I know that my Countess has a stopping-place in the Rue Coq Heron, and doubtless it is there she has gone.'—'Yes, probably she is there,' said the King. 'Go after her, Count. I grant you leave of absence until to-morrow, provided you then bring the Countess back to us.'"

Charny's glance, as he pronounced these words, was directed so pointedly towards Andrée, that feeling ill at ease, and unable to evade his look, she shut her eyes.

Charny continued: "The King went on: 'You will say to her, always speaking in the King's name, that we will find a suitable lodgment for her here somewhere, even if I have to hunt it up myself, — accommodations certainly less spacious than at Versailles, but large enough for a husband and wife. Go, Count, go. She must be very anxious about you, and you ought to be anxious about her. Go!' Then recalling me, when I had taken several steps towards the door, he said, extending his hand, which I kissed: 'By the way, seeing you dressed in mourning, — that is where I ought to have commenced, — you have had the misfortune to lose your brother. One is powerless to console such afflictions, even a King; but even a King may ask if your brother was married, if he had a wife or children, if this wife and children can be cared for by the King? In any case, Monsieur, if such a wife and children exist, bring them here, present them to me; the Queen shall take charge of the mother, and I of the children.'"

As he repeated these words tears coursed down Charny's cheeks.

"Doubtless the King only repeated what the Queen had already said to you?" queried Andrée.

"The Queen, Madame," replied Charny with hesitating voice, "did not do me the honor to speak a single word to me on the subject, and that is why this remembrance of the King's touched me so profoundly. Seeing me burst into tears, he said to me: 'Come, come, Monsieur, I was wrong to speak of this, but I act always under the inspiration of my heart, and my heart told me to do as I have done. Return now to our dear Andrée, Count, for if the people whom we love cannot comfort us, they can weep with us, and we can weep with them, which is always an alleviation.'

"And so," continued Charny, "here am I, by order of the King, Madame, — which will perhaps be my excuse."

"Ah Monsieur," cried Andrée rising quickly, and offering both hands to Charny, "can you doubt it?"

Charny swiftly took her two hands between his own, and touched them with his lips.

Andrée uttered a cry, as if his lips had been red-hot iron, and fell back on the sofa; but her clenched hands were so interlocked with Charny's, that in falling back upon the sofa she drew the Count after her; and without her so willing it, and without his so wishing it, he found himself seated by her side.

At the same instant, believing she heard a noise in her bedroom, she swiftly withdrew herself from Charny. On his part, not knowing to what sentiment he should attribute the Countess's outcry, and the brusque motion she had made, Charny at once arose, and stood in front of her.

CHAPTER XI.

THE BEDROOM.

CHARNY leaned on the end of the sofa and heaved a sigh. Andrée let her head fall on her hand.

That sigh of Charny's drew one like it from the depths of her own bosom. What took place just then in the heart of that young woman is simply impossible to describe.

Married four years to a man whom she adored, that man himself was constantly occupied with another woman, with never an idea of the fearful sacrifice Andrée made in espousing him.

Keeping everything to herself, she had seen all and borne all, with the abnegation demanded by her double duty as a wife and a subject.

Lately it seemed as if some of her husband's glances were kinder, and some of the Queen's words harder, — as if her devotion were therefore not wholly fruitless.

During the days just passed, — terrible days, full of incessant agony for them all, — Andrée, alone perhaps amidst the courtiers and frightened attendants, had felt some exultant sensations and pleasant throbs. This was when, in some happy moment, by motion, look, or word, Charny appeared to think of her, — looking about for her with anxiety, meeting her with delight.

It might be the light touch of the ungloved hand, communicating a tremor unperceived by the surrounding crowd, but vivifying for themselves a common thought ;

but these unwonted and delicious sensations were unknown to her, with her form of snow and her diamond heart, which had never known anything of love except its sorrows.

Now, all at a blow, when this poor solitary creature had recovered her child, and so once more became a mother, behold something like the rosy Aurora of love showed itself on her sad and sombre horizon. Only — by a strange coincidence, which proved that happiness was not for her — these two events combined themselves in such a strange fashion that each neutralized the other, — that the return of the husband banished the love of the child, as the presence of the child extinguished the dawning love of the husband.

This is what Charny could not perceive in the cry which escaped from Andrée's lips, in the motion that repelled him, — in the sorrow-laden silence which succeeded her cry, so resembling a groan, — which was nevertheless a cry of love, — and in that action, which might have been inspired by repulsion, but was really only prompted by fear.

Charny contemplated Andrée an instant, with an expression which the young wife could not have misunderstood, if she had but raised her eyes to those of her husband.

He uttered a sigh, and renewing the conversation, at the point where they had abandoned it, he asked : "What shall I report to the King, Madame?"

Andrée trembled at the sound of his voice. Then, lifting to the Count her clear and limpid eyes, she said : "Monsieur, I have suffered so much since I have lived at Court, that, as the Queen has the goodness to give me permission to withdraw, I accept that permission with gratitude. I was not born to live in that world, and

have always found my repose in solitude, if not my happiness. The happiest days of my life were those which I passed as a young girl in the Chateau Taverney, — and later, those which I spent in retreat, at the Convent Saint Denis, with that noble daughter of France whom they called Madame Louise. So with your permission, Monsieur, I will live in this pavilion, which is full of remembrances for me, which, however sad, are not without their pleasant side."

As Andrée demanded this permission of him Charny inclined his head, as a man ready not only to grant a prayer, but to obey an order.

"This then is your resolution, Madame?"

"Yes, Monsieur," responded Andrée, softly but firmly.

Charny bowed again, and said: "There remains then only one thing for me to ask of you, — that is, if I may be permitted to visit you here."

Andrée fixed on Charny her large liquid eyes, usually so calm and cold, but now full of surprise and delight. "Undoubtedly, Monsieur," she said; "and as I see no one, whenever your duties at the Tuileries permit you to throw away a few hours here, I shall always welcome their consecration to me, however short they may be."

Charny had never before seen such a charm in Andrée's look, never noticed such tenderness in her voice. A feeling ran through his veins, like the velvet thrill which comes with a first kiss.

He looked at the place which he had occupied by her side, and which had been vacant since he rose from it. He would have given a year to sit there again, even if Andrée repulsed him as she had before; but, timid as a babe, he dared not permit himself in such boldness, without being encouraged thereto.

On her part, Andrée would have sacrificed not merely

one year, but ten years of life, to feel, then and there, the bliss whereof she had so long been deprived.

Unhappily neither understood the other, and each remained statuesque, in an attitude almost dolorous.

Charny first broke the silence, to which He alone who is permitted to read the heart could give the true interpretation.

"You say you have suffered much since you came to live at Court?" he asked. "Has not the King always shown towards you a respect amounting to veneration, and the Queen a tenderness which nearly reaches idolatry?"

"Indeed," said Andrée, "the King has been kindness itself towards me."

"You will permit me to observe, Madame, that you only respond to part of my question. Has not the Queen been at least as perfect towards you as the King?"

Andrée's teeth closed tightly, as if her rebellious nature refused to answer. At last she said, with an effort: "I have nothing wherewith to reproach the Queen, and I should be unfair if I did not render that justice to her Majesty."

"I say this to you, Madame," persisted Charny, "because it has seemed to me for some time, — very likely I have deceived myself, — that her friendship for you has received a chill."

"It is possible, Monsieur," said Andrée, "and this may be the reason why, as I have just had the honor to tell you, I desire to quit the Court."

"But then, Madame, you will be so very solitary, so isolated."

"Have I not always been so, Monsieur," she rejoined with a sigh, "as a child, as a maiden, and as ——"

Andrée paused, feeling that she was going too far.

"Complete your sentence, Madame," said Charny.

"You have already understood me, Monsieur. I was about to say, *and as a wife*."

"Have I that happiness, that you deign to reproach me?"

"Reproach?" replied Andrée quickly. "What right have I, great God, to reproach you. Do you suppose I have forgotten the circumstances under which we were united? The very opposite of those who at the foot of the altar swear reciprocal love and mutual protection, we swore — yes, *we* — eternal indifference, complete separation. We should have nothing wherewith to reproach ourselves, even if one of us had forgotten the bridal oath."

A sigh, roused by Andrée's words, fell from Charny's heart.

"I see that your resolution is taken, Madame," he said; "but at least you will permit me to concern myself as to the way in which you expect to live here. Shall you not be somewhat uncomfortable?"

Andrée smiled plaintively. "The household of my father was so poor," she said, "that this pavilion, bare as it appears to you, is furnished with a luxury to which I have not been accustomed."

"But that charming retreat at Trianon, — the Versailles Palace —"

"Oh, I knew very well, Monsieur; that I should only be a sojourner there."

"At least you should have here all that is needful for yourself?"

"I shall find all that I formerly enjoyed."

"Let us see!" said Charny, who wished to form some idea of the apartments which Andrée was to inhabit, and began to look about him.

"What do you wish, Monsieur?" she asked rising

hastily, and throwing a rapid and anxious glance towards the bedroom.

"Unless you are very humble in your desires, this pavilion is surely a very modest dwelling-place, Madame. I have passed through an antechamber, and here I am in the parlor. This door" — and he opened a side entrance — "opens into the dining-room, and that ——"

Andrée glided between the Count and the door towards which he was advancing, and behind which, in her mind's eye, she could see Sebastien.

"Monsieur!" she exclaimed, "I beg you, — not a step farther, Monsieur!" and her extended arm resolutely barred his ingress.

"Yes, I understand," said Charny with a sigh, "this is the door of your sleeping-room."

"Yes, Monsieur," stammered Andrée, in a stifled voice.

Charny looked at his Countess. She was pale and trembling. Fright was never manifested more plainly than in the expression which now spread itself over her countenance.

"Ah, Madame," he murmured, with a tearful voice, "I knew very well you did not love me, but I did not suppose you hated me so much."

Incapable of longer remaining near Andrée without breaking down, he reeled an instant like a drunken man. Then, rallying all his nerve, he threw himself out of the apartment, with a moan of despair which went to the bottom of Andrée's heart.

The young wife followed him with her eyes as far as he could be seen. She bent her head, so that she could distinguish the noise of his carriage, which sounded farther and farther away. Then, as if she felt that her heart was like to break, and comprehended that she had none too much maternal affection with which to combat the

other love, she threw herself into the bedroom, exclaiming, "Sebastien, Sebastien!"

No voice responded to hers. She listened in vain for any echo to her dolorous wail.

By the dim reflection of the night-lamp she looked about her anxiously, and saw that the chamber was vacant.

She could hardly believe her eyes, and called a second time, "Sebastien, Sebastien!"

The same silence!

Then only did she notice that the window was open, and that the outside breeze, penetrating the room, made the flame of the night-lamp quiver.

This was the same window which had stood open fifteen years before, when her child vanished the first time.

"It is just!" she cried. "Did he not tell me I was not his mother?"

Comprehending that she had lost both husband and child, at the very moment when she thought she had regained them, Andrée threw herself on her bed, her arms extended and her hands clasped. She was at the end of her strength, the end of her resignation, the end of her prayers. She had only sobs, tears, sighs, and an overpowering feeling of grief.

An hour or so passed in absolute prostration, in forgetfulness of the entire world, in that desire for universal destruction which is felt by the unhappy, the hope that they may enter annihilation, and drag mankind along with them.

Suddenly it seemed to Andrée that something yet more terrible than her grief glided between her heart and her tears. A feeling slowly invaded all that remained to her of life, — a sensation she had only experienced two

or three times before, but which had always foreshadowed some great crisis of her existence.

By a movement almost involuntary she slowly straightened herself. Her trembling voice was stifled in her throat. Her whole body seemed awlirl. Through the blinding mist of her tears she believed that she could see she was not alone. As her eyes dried she saw more clearly. A man stood before her, who had evidently leaped through the casement to reach her side.

She wanted to call, to scream, to extend her hand towards the bell-rope, but this was impossible. She began to feel that invincible torpor which had formerly been the signal of Balsamo's presence. At last, in that man standing before her, in the fascination of his look and gesture, she recognized Gilbert.

How could Gilbert, the execrated father, be *there*, in the very place of the beloved child whom she sought?

This is what we shall try to explicate to the reader.

CHAPTER XII.

A FAMILIAR ROAD.

It was indeed Doctor Gilbert who was closeted with the King, when, according to Isidore's order and Sebastien's request, the usher brought them this information.

At the end of half-an-hour Gilbert came out. The King placed more and more confidence in him ; for the straightforward heart of the King appreciated the loyalty in the heart of Gilbert.

As he came out the usher notified him that he was waited for in the antechamber of the Queen.

He was about to take the corridor which led that way, when a swinging door opened and shut, only a few paces from him, giving egress to a young man, evidently ignorant of the locality, who hesitated whether to go to the right or left.

This young man saw Gilbert coming towards him, and paused to ask the way. Suddenly Gilbert also paused, as the flame of a lantern shone full in the face of the young man.

"The Vicomte Isidore !" exclaimed Gilbert.

"Doctor Gilbert !" responded Isidore.

"Is it you who have done me the great honor of asking for me ?"

"Precisely — yes, Doctor, — I and some one else."

"Who then ?"

"Some one," continued Isidore, "whom you will be very glad to see again."

"Would it be indiscreet to ask who?"

"No, but it would be cruel to keep you waiting longer. — Come with me, or, rather, lead me, into one of the Queen's antechambers they call the Green Salon."

"On my faith," said Gilbert, smiling, "I am not much at home in the topography of palaces, and specially the Palace of the Tuileries; nevertheless, I will try to be your guide."

Gilbert walked on before. After several ineffectual efforts he pushed open a door which led into the Green Salon; only the Green Salon was empty.

Isidore looked all about him and called for an usher; but the confusion was as yet so great throughout the palace that, contrary to all the rules of etiquette, there was no usher in the antechamber.

"Let us wait a moment," said Gilbert. "The man cannot be far away; and while waiting, Monsieur, — at least, if such a disclosure is not a breach of confidence, — I pray you tell me who was waiting for me."

Isidore looked about anxiously. "Can you not guess?" he said.

"No."

"Some one whom I encountered on my day's journey, coming on foot to Paris, uneasy as to what might have happened to you, — somebody whom I mounted on my crupper, and whom I brought here."

"You are not speaking of Pitou?"

"No, Doctor, I speak of your son Sebastien."

"Of Sebastien?" exclaimed Gilbert. "Well, where is he?" and his eye rapidly ran over the recesses of the vast salon.

"He was here. He promised to wait for me. Probably the usher, to whose care I commended him, not wishing to leave him here alone, has taken him somewhere with him."

At that moment the usher re-entered. He was alone.

"What has become of the youngster whom I left here?" asked Isidore.

"What young man?" asked the usher.

Gilbert had enormous self-control. He felt alarmed, but contained himself, and drew near in his turn.

Isidore could not prevent himself from murmuring, "Oh my God!" a prey to dire misgivings.

"Look here, Monsieur!" said Gilbert with a firm voice. "Collect all your senses! This child is my son. He is not acquainted in Paris; and if perchance he has gone outside the palace, as he is a stranger, he runs the risk of being lost."

"A child?" said a second usher, who now came in.

"Yes, a boy, almost a young man."

"Of about fifteen?"

"Even so!"

"I saw him in the corridors, following a lady who had just come from her Majesty's presence."

"And the lady, do you know who she was?"

"No. She drew her mantle close about her eyes."

"But what did she do?"

"She ran away, almost, and the boy pursued her, exclaiming *Madame!*"

"Let us go down," said Gilbert, "and the concierge will tell us who has gone out."

Isidore and Gilbert took the same corridor through which Andrée had passed an hour before, followed by Sebastien. They came to the door of the Princes' Courtyard, and questioned the porter.

"Yes indeed," he replied, "I saw a woman, walking so fast that she seemed almost running. A boy came after her. She entered a cab. The boy rushed forward, and so overtook her."

"And what next?" demanded Gilbert.

"Well, the lady drew the boy after her into the carriage, embraced him ardently, gave her directions, closed the door, and the cab drove away."

"Do you remember the address?" asked Gilbert anxiously.

"Yes, perfectly! Rue Coq Heron, number nine, the first coachway as you leave the Rue Plâtrière."

Gilbert trembled.

"Why," said Isidore, "that is the address of my sister-in-law, the Comtesse de Charny."

"Fatality!" murmured Gilbert.

In that age the world was too philosophical to say *Providence*.

Then he added to himself: "He recognized her!"

"Well," said Isidore, "let us go to the Countess's."

Gilbert saw in what a situation it would place Andrée, if he presented himself to her with the brother of her husband.

"Monsieur," said he, "so long as my son is with the Countess he is in security; and as I have already the honor of her acquaintance, instead of accompanying me, I think it will be better for you to set out at once on your journey, — for after what I heard in the King's apartments, I presume you are to go to Turin?"

"Yes, Monsieur."

"Well, then, receive my thanks for what you have done for Sebastien, and depart without losing a minute."

"Nevertheless, Doctor —"

"Monsieur, the moment a father tells you *he* is without anxiety, you can safely leave him. Wherever Sebastien may be, with the Countess or elsewhere, fear nothing; my son will be found."

"Then you so desire, Doctor?"

"I so *pray*."

Isidore extended his hand to Gilbert, who pressed it with more cordiality than he was accustomed to show to men of such rank, and as soon as Isidore re-entered the palace, the Doctor went into the Place du Carrousel, emerged on the Rue Chartres, crossed diagonally the Place of the Palace Royal, passed along the Rue Saint Honoré, was lost an instant in the labyrinth of small streets which empty into the market-place, and then found himself at the corner of two streets. These were the Rue Plâtrière and the Rue Coq Heron.

These streets had both painful reminders for Gilbert. There, very often, in the very place where he now stood, his heart had beaten even more violently than it was beating at this hour. An instant he hesitated between the two streets; but he then decided sharply, and took the Rue Coq Heron.

Andrée's porch, the coachway at number nine, was well known to him, and it was not because he feared himself mistaken that he did not stop there. No, he had evidently sought a pretext for entering the mansion; and, finding no such pretext, he was trying now to find some means of access.

He pushed the door to see if, by one of those miracles which chance gives to the perplexed, it had been left open; but it resisted.

He ran along the wall. The wall was ten feet high. This he knew very well; but he looked to see if there was not some wagon, left alongside the wall by some teamster, wherewith he might gain his end. With such an aid, active and vigorous as he was, he could easily reach the inside; but there was no such wagon near the wall.

Consequently he must find other means of entrance.

He approached the door, laid his hand on the knocker, lifted the knocker; but changing his mind he replaced it softly, without making the slightest noise under his gloved hand.

Evidently a new idea, springing from a hope almost lost, enlightened his spirit.

"Indeed," he murmured, "it is possible."

He went back towards the Rue Plâtrière, which he followed only for an instant.

In passing he threw a glance and a sigh on that fountain whither he came more than once, sixteen years before, to wet the hard black bread, received through the generosity of the good Thérèse and the hospitality of the famous Rousseau.

Rousseau was dead. Thérèse was dead. He had risen. He had attained respect, reputation, fortune. Alas! Was he now happier, less troubled, less full of anxieties present and future, than in those days, when burning with a foolish passion, he came to moisten his bread at this fountain?

He kept on his way. At last he stopped unhesitatingly before a small side gateway, of which the upper part was grated. Apparently this was his destination.

An instant he leaned against the wall, perhaps because the sum of remembrances which that little gate recalled nearly crushed him, — perhaps because he feared the hope which brought him hither was doomed to defeat.

At last he ran his hand over the door, and with a feeling of inexpressible joy he found, in the orifice of a little round hole, the tag of a string, by whose aid, in the daytime, the gate could be opened.

Gilbert bethought himself that oftentimes at night they forgot to pull the string inside, and that one evening, when he was belated, in returning to the attic which

he occupied at Rousseau's, he profited by this forgetfulness to re-enter the house and regain his bed.

As was the case formerly, this house, where he now paused, was occupied by people poor enough to feel no fear of thieves. There was the same carelessness, the same forgetfulness.

Gilbert pulled the little cord. The door opened, and he found himself in an alley damp and black, at the end of which, like a snake turning a pirouette on his own tail, rose the stairway, slippery and clammy.

Gilbert closed the door with care, and feeling his way along, gained the first steps of the staircase.

When he had mounted ten steps he stopped. A feeble light, straggling through dirty glass, showed that there was a window at this point, and he could see that the night, however dark, was less sombre without than within. Through this glass, defaced as it was, one could see the stars in the clear sky.

Gilbert sought for the little bolt which fastened the window, opened it, and, by the same pathway he had followed twice before, descended into the garden.

Although fifteen years had glided away, this garden was so vivid to the memory of Gilbert that he recognized everything, — trees, flowerbeds, and even the little angle, covered with a vine, where the gardener used to place his ladder.

He did not know whether, at that hour of the night, the doors were fastened; he did not know whether Charny was with his wife, — or, in default of the Count, some lackey or chambermaid.

Resolved at all events to regain Sebastien, he still felt, in his heart, that he ought not to compromise Andrée, except as a last extremity; and he felt, above all, that he must see her alone.

He first went to the door of the low stairway. He pressed the latch of the door, and the door yielded. He argued that if this door was not fastened Andrée was not alone. Unless tremendously preoccupied, a woman living alone, in a ground pavilion, does not neglect to fasten the door.

He closed it gently, and without noise, glad to know that this entrance remained as a last resource.

Then he went along the staircase platform, and hastily applied his eye to the Persian blind, which fifteen years before, when opened so suddenly under Andrée's hand, had bruised his forehead, on that night when, with Balsamo's one hundred thousand francs in hand, he came to proffer marriage to this haughty girl.

This blind belonged to the parlor. The parlor was lighted; but as the curtains were drawn before the windows it was impossible to see anything inside.

Gilbert continued his investigations. Suddenly he seemed to see, trembling on the earth and on the trees, a feeble light, coming from an open window. This open window belonged to the bedroom. This window he also recognized, for it was through it he had once stolen the child whom to-day he again sought for.

He turned aside in order to be beyond the rays projected from the window, and in order to see without being seen, hidden in the obscurity.

Stationed at a point where he could look far into the chamber, he could see the open parlor door; and in the circle which was within reach of his glance, he could also see a bed.

On the bed was a rigid, dishevelled, prostrate woman. Hoarse guttural sounds escaped from her throat, like those of the death-rattle, interrupted from time to time by moans and sobs.

Gilbert came slowly forward, avoiding the line of light, which he hesitated to enter for fear of being seen. He finally pressed his pale face against an angle of the window.

In Gilbert's mind there was no longer any doubt. This woman was Andrée, and Andrée was alone.

But why was Andrée alone? Why did Andrée weep? That was what Gilbert could only learn by asking.

Then it was that noiselessly he climbed through the window and stood beside her, — the moment when she was forced to turn, by that magnetic attraction to which Andrée was always so accessible.

The two enemies found themselves once more face to face.

CHAPTER XIII.

WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO SEBASTIEN.

ANDRÉE'S first feeling in thus beholding Gilbert was one not merely of extreme fear, but also of invincible repugnance.

For her he was always the same wretched little Gilbert, — the terrible demon ambushed among the groves of the Trianon, — rather than Gilbert the American, the friend of Washington and Lafayette, however elevated by science, by study, and by his genius.

As for Gilbert, on the contrary, — despite her misunderstandings, despite her abuse, despite even her persecution, — though he no longer cherished for Andrée that ardent love which, as a young man, made him commit a crime for her sake, he yet regarded her with a tender and deep interest, which would compel his manhood to render her a service, even at the risk of his life.

This was because — in the intelligent insight where-with Nature had endowed him, in that absolute justice which he had imbibed with his education — Gilbert judged himself. He understood all the misfortunes which had befallen Andrée, and that he should not stand guiltless towards her until he recompensed her with an amount of felicity equal to the misfortunes which she had experienced through himself.

Now wherein and how could Gilbert beneficently influence Andrée's future? That is what he could not see.

In finding this woman, whom he had already seen a victim to such despair, the prey of new afflictions, all the pitiful fibres of his heart were moved by her great misery.

Therefore, instead of making use immediately of his mesmeric power, which he had once so successfully employed with her, he determined to talk with Andrée kindly, but to give that up if he found her rebellious, and return to his disciplinary method, which she could not evade.

The result was that Andrée, already encompassed by the magnetic fluid, regained her free-will little by little. Partly with Gilbert's permission the influence was dissipated, — like a cloud which evaporates, and permits the eyes once more to behold the distant horizon.

It was she who took the initiative word. "What do you wish, Monsieur?" she said. "Why do you come here? By what means have you come?"

"By what means have I come, Madame?" responded Gilbert. "Precisely as I have come before. Be tranquil, therefore; no one will suspect my presence here. Why have I come? I come because I have to reclaim a treasure, indifferent to you, but precious to me, — my son. What do I want? I want you to tell me where my son is, whom you have enticed away, taken into your carriage, and brought here."

"What has become of him?" replied Andrée. "Do I know? He has fled from me. You have thoroughly taught him to hate his mother."

"His mother, Madame! Are you really his mother?"

"Oh!" cried Andrée. "He sees my sorrow, he has heard my lamentations, he has looked upon my despair, and then asks if I am a mother."

"Then you are ignorant of his whereabouts?"

"I tell you that he has fled,—that he was in this chamber; but when I came into it, believing I should rejoin him, I found the window open and the chamber empty."

"My God," exclaimed Gilbert, "where can he have gone? The unfortunate boy is unacquainted with Paris, and it is past midnight."

"Oh!" cried Andrée in her turn, taking a step towards Gilbert, "do you think that some accident has befallen him?"

"That is what we must find out," said Gilbert, "that is what you must tell me;" and he extended his hand towards Andrée.

"Monsieur, Monsieur," she pleaded, reluctant to submit herself to the magnetic control.

"Madame, have no fear," said Gilbert. "It is the mother through whom I am going to ask what has become of her son. You are sacred to me!"

Andrée uttered a sigh, and sank into an armchair, murmuring the name of Sebastien.

"Sleep!" said Gilbert; "but sound asleep though you are, see with your heart."

"I am asleep," replied Andrée.

"Must I exert all my will-power," demanded Gilbert, "or are you disposed to answer me voluntarily?"

"Will you again tell my child that I am not his mother?"

"That depends! Do you love him?"

"He asks if I love him, the child of my inward life! Oh yes, yes! I love him ardently."

"Then you are his mother, as I am his father, Madame, since you love him as I love him."

"Ah!" said Andrée, breathing again.

"Then you will answer willingly?" said Gilbert.

"Will you allow me to see him again when you have found him?"

"Have I not said that you are his mother, as I am his father? You love your child, Madame; you shall again see your child!"

"I thank you," said Andrée, with an unspeakable expression of joy, clapping her hands together. "Now then, question me. — I see — only —!"

"What?"

"Let me trace him from the moment of his departure, so that I may be sure not to lose sight of him."

"Be it so. Where did you first see him?"

"In the Green Salon!"

"Whither did he follow you?"

"Along the corridors."

"Where did he overtake you?"

"When I entered the cab."

"Whither did you bring him?"

"Into the parlor, — the room on that side."

"Where did he sit?"

"Near me, on the sofa."

"Did he remain there long?"

"A half-hour, perhaps."

"Why did he leave you?"

"Because we heard the noise of a carriage?"

"Who was in that carriage?"

Andrée hesitated.

"Who was in that carriage?" repeated Gilbert, in a firmer tone and with a stronger will.

"Charny."

"Where did you conceal the boy?"

"I thrust him into this bedroom."

"What did he say as he entered?"

"That I was not his mother."

"And why did he say that?"

Andrée was silent.

"And why did he say that? Speak, I so will it!"

"Because I had said to him —"

"What had you said to him?"

"Because I had said to him" — Andrée made an effort — "that you were an infamous wretch."

"Consider the heart of the poor boy, Madame, and reckon up the unhappiness you caused him."

"Oh my God, my God," murmured Andrée. "Pardon, my child, pardon!"

"Did Charny suspect that the boy was here?"

"No."

"You are sure of it?"

"Yes."

"Why did he not remain?"

"Because the Count never stays with me."

"What did he come for, then?"

Andrée remained an instant in thought, with staring eyes, as if trying to see into the darkness.

"Oh my God!" she exclaimed, "my God. — Oliver, dear Oliver —"

Gilbert looked at her with amazement.

"Oh unhappy woman that I am!" murmured Andrée.

"He came back to me. It was in order to remain near me that he refused that mission. He loves me, he loves me!"

Gilbert began confusedly to read this terrible drama, which his mind was the first to penetrate.

"And you," he asked, "do you love him?"

Andrée sighed.

"Do you love him?" repeated Gilbert.

"Why do you ask that question?" demanded Andrée.

"Read my thoughts!"

"Ah yes, I see ! Your intention is good. You would make me so happy as to compel forgetfulness of the evil you have done me ; but I should refuse the happiness if I owed it to you. I hate you, and shall continue to hate you."

"Poor humanity !" murmured Gilbert. "Are there allotted to thee such great stores of felicity that thou canst choose which ought to be accepted ? — So you love him ?" he added.

"Yes."

"Since when ?"

"Since the time when I saw him, — since the day he went from Paris to Versailles, in the same carriage as the Queen and myself."

"And you know what love is, Andrée ?" murmured Gilbert sadly.

"I know," responded the young woman, "that love has been given to humanity in proportion to its ability to suffer."

"That is well. There speaks the wife, there speaks the mother. A rough diamond, you are being fashioned in the hands of that awful lapidary whom men call Sorrow. — Let us return to Sebastien."

"Yes, yes, let us return to him. Don't let me think of Charny. It troubles me ; and instead of following my child, I shall perhaps follow the Count."

"That is right. Wife, forget thy husband ; mother, think only of thy child."

This expression, half joyous, which overspread not only her countenance but Andrée's whole body, now disappeared, to give place to her usual expression.

"Where was he while you talked with the Count ?"

"He was there listening, — there, — there at the door."

"How much of that conversation did he overhear?"

"All the first part."

"At what moment did he decide to quit the chamber?"

"At the moment when Charny —"

Andrée stopped.

"At the moment when Charny —?" repeated Gilbert pitilessly.

"At the moment when Charny kissed my hand, and I cried out."

"You can see him then?"

"Yes, I can see him, with his forehead wrinkled, his lips compressed, and his fists closed against his breast."

"Follow him with your eyes, and from this moment do not leave him, do not lose sight of him."

"I see him, I see him!" said Andrée.

"What is he doing?"

"He looks about him, to see if there is not some door opening into the garden. As he does not find one, he goes to the window, opens it, throws a last glance towards the parlor, leaps over the window-sill, and disappears."

"Follow him in the darkness."

"I cannot."

Gilbert came nearer, and passed his hand before her eyes.

"You know there is no night to you," he said.

"Look!"

"Ah, there he is! — running by the alley along the wall. He is at the big doorway. He opens it without being seen, and darts away towards the Rue Plâtrière. Ah, he pauses. He speaks to a woman who is passing by."

"Listen well," said Gilbert, "and you will hear what he asks."

"I am listening."

"And what does he ask?"

"He asks for the Rue Saint Honoré."

"Yes, that is where I live. He has returned to me. He is waiting for me, poor boy!"

Andrée shook her head.

"No," she said, with an evident expression of disquietude, "no, he has not returned to you — no, he is not waiting —"

"Where is he, then?"

"Let me follow him, or I shall lose him."

"Oh follow him, follow him!" exclaimed Gilbert, thinking that Andrée foresaw some evil.

"Ah, I see him, I see him," she exclaimed.

"Well?"

"There he is, entering the Rue Grenelle. Now he enters the Rue Saint Honoré. He crosses, always running, the Square of the Palace Royal. Again he inquires his way, again he rushes on. He is at the Rue Richelieu. He is at the Rue Frondeurs, — at the Rue Neuve Saint Roch. Stop, child, stop, thou unhappy — Sebastien. Sebastien, canst thou not see that carriage, coming up the Rue Sourdière? I see it, I see it! The horses. — Ah!"

Andrée sent forth a fearful shriek, sprang upright, with motherly anguish depicted on her face, down which were coursing great drops of perspiration, mingled with tears.

"Remember," cried Gilbert, "if any mischief happens to him, it will recoil on thine own head."

Andrée went on speaking, without hearing, without understanding what Gilbert said. "The God of Heaven be praised, the breastplate of the horse strikes him and throws him aside, beyond the reach of the wheels. —

There, he falls, he lies senseless, but he is not dead. Oh no, no, he is not dead, — fainted, fainted, only. Help, help! It is my child, my child!" and with a distracting cry Andrée fell back almost fainting into her chair.

Notwithstanding Gilbert's desire to know more he accorded to the exhausted Andrée an instant's repose, whereof she stood sorely in need.

He feared lest a fibre of her heart should break, or a vein burst in her brain, if strained too far; but as soon as he believed she could be interrogated without danger, he said, "Well?"

"Wait, wait," responded Andrée. "They are making a great circle about him. Oh Heaven, let me pass, let me see him. It is my son, it is my Sebastien. Oh my God, is there not a surgeon or a physician among you all?"

"Yes, I am coming!" exclaimed Gilbert.

"Wait!" again said Andrée, grasping his arm. "See, the crowd opens. Surely it is somebody whom they have called, somebody who is coming. — Hurry, hurry, Monsieur. You see very well that he is not dead, you see very well that you can save him. Oh!" she cried, sending forth an exclamation which resembled a cry of terror.

"My God, what is it?" asked Gilbert.

"I will not let that man touch my child," cried Andrée. "It is not a man; it is a dwarf, it is a demon, a vampire! oh, hideous, hideous!"

"Madame, Madame," murmured Gilbert, shuddering, "for Heaven's sake don't lose sight of Sebastien."

Andrée replied, with set eye, quivering lip, and extended finger: "Oh be calm — I am so — I am so!"

"What does he do, this man?"

"He takes him away. He goes up the Rue Sourdrière. He turns to the left, into the Lane Saint Hyacinth. He

goes to a low door which stands half open. He pushes it wide open, he bends himself, he descends some steps. He lays him on a table, where there are quills and ink, and papers both written and printed. He takes off the boy's coat and rolls up his sleeve. He secures his arm with bandages, brought to him by a woman dirty and hideous as himself. He opens his case and takes out a lancet. He is going to bleed him. — Oh I will not see it, I will not see it, — the blood of my son."

"Well, then," said Gilbert, "go back, and count the steps of the stairway."

"I have counted. There are eleven."

"Examine the door carefully, and tell if there is about it anything remarkable."

"Yes, a little square aperture, protected by a cross-bar."

"Very well, that is all I need."

"Run, run, and you will find him where I tell you."

"Do you wish to awaken at once, and remember what you have seen; or will you wake to-morrow morning, forgetting it all?"

"Awake me now, and let me come to myself."

Gilbert, following her bent, pressed his thumbs on Andrée's brows, breathed on her forehead, and pronounced the one word, Awake!

Immediately the young woman's eyes became animated and her limbs became more supple. She looked at Gilbert almost in terror, and continued, awake, the exhortation she had given in her slumber. "Oh run, run," she said, "and take him out of the hands of that man; he makes me afraid."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE MAN OF PLACE LOUIS FIFTEENTH.

No need to urge Gilbert in his search. He hurried out of the room ; and as it would cause too much delay to retrace the steps by which he had come, he ran straight to the gateway on the Rue Coq Heron, opened it without the help of the porter, pulled it to behind him, and found himself on the King's highway.

He remembered perfectly well the route described by Andrée, and followed up the traces of Sebastien.

Like the boy he crossed the Square of the Palace Royal, went along the Rue Saint Honoré, — now deserted, for it was hard on one o'clock in the morning. At the corner of the Rue Sourdière he turned to the right, then to the left, till he found himself in Saint Hyacinth Lane.

Then he began a minute inspection of the locality.

In the third door on the right he recognized, by its small square aperture, protected by an iron crossbar, the door which Andrée had described. Her description was so positive that it was impossible to be mistaken. He knocked. Nobody responded, and he knocked a second time.

Then he fancied he heard somebody creeping along the staircase, and coming towards him with a timid and suspicious step. He knocked a third time.

"Who knocks?" asked a feminine voice.

"Open," responded Gilbert, "and fear nothing. I am the father of the wounded boy whom you have rescued."

"Open the door, Albertine," said another voice, "it is Doctor Gilbert."

"My father, my father," cried a third voice, which Gilbert recognized as that of Sebastien, and then drew a long breath.

The door opened. Stammering his thanks he sprang down the steps. At the bottom he found himself in a sort of cellar, lighted by a lamp, standing on a table covered with printed and written papers, as Andrée had disclosed.

In the shadow, lying on a kind of pallet, Gilbert beheld his son, who called to him with extended arms. Although Gilbert's self-control was strong, paternal love bore away philosophic decorum, and he threw himself towards his child, whom he clasped to his heart, taking care, however, not to hurt the bleeding arm or sore breast.

After a long embrace, wherein, by the soft murmur of two mouths seeking each other, all was told without the articulation of a word, Gilbert turned towards his host, whom he had hardly noticed.

The man stood upright, with his legs wide apart, one hand resting on the table, the other on his hip, and there fell upon him the light of the lamp, from which he had removed the shade, the better to enjoy the scene which was taking place before his eyes.

"Look, Albertine," he said, "and be thankful, with me, that chance has allowed me to render a service to one of my brothers."

As the surgeon pronounced these words with some emphasis, Gilbert turned around, as we have said, and threw a glance at the deformed being before him.

There was something yellow and green about his gray eyes, which projected from his head like those of the

fabled peasants pursued by the anger of Latona, — who, in the process of their metamorphosis, were no longer men, but were not yet toads.

In spite of himself Gilbert shuddered. It seemed to him as if in some hideous dream he had already beheld this man, — through a veil of blood, as it were.

Again Gilbert turned to Sebastien, and leaned over him still more tenderly. At last he overcame his first feeling of repulsion, and went up to the strange man, whom Andrée had seen in her magnetic sleep, and who had greatly distressed her.

"Monsieur," said he, "accept all the acknowledgments of a father to whom you have restored his son. They are sincere, and come from the bottom of my heart."

"I have only done my duty, Monsieur," replied the surgeon, — "the duty inspired by my heart, and recommended by science. I know mankind; and, as Terence says, Nothing human is a stranger to me. Besides I have a tender heart. I cannot bear to see an insect suffer, — certainly not, and with stronger reason, my equal, a being like myself."

"Have I the honor of knowing the eminent philanthropist to whom I have the pleasure of speaking?"

"You do not know me, my confrère?" said the surgeon, laughing with mirth which he intended to be benevolent, but which was simply hideous. "Well, never mind, I know you. You are Doctor Gilbert, the friend of Washington and Lafayette," — he dwelt in a curious fashion on the last name, — "a man of both America and France, the honest Utopian, who wrote the magnificent essays on Constitutional Monarchism, which you addressed from America to his Majesty Louis the Sixteenth, essays which his Majesty Louis the Sixteenth recompensed by sending you to the Bastille the moment

you touched the soil of France. You wished to save him, by showing him, in advance, the drift of the future, and he opened for you the way to prison,—a royal acknowledgment.”

Here the surgeon laughed anew, but it was a discordant and menacing laugh.

“If you know me, Monsieur, that is another reason why I insist upon my request, that I may have the honor of acquaintance with you, in my turn.”

“Oh, we were acquainted a long time ago, Monsieur,” said the surgeon,—“twenty years ago, on a terrible night, the night of the Thirtieth of May, 1770. You were about the age of that lad. You were brought to me as he was, wounded, senseless, injured. You were brought to me by my master, Rousseau, and I laid you on a table, surrounded with corpses and severed limbs. It is a grateful remembrance to me, of that dreadful night, that I was able to save some lives,—thanks to the steel which knew how to reach just far enough to heal, and knew when to cut and how to cicatrize.”

“Then, Monsieur,” exclaimed Gilbert, “you are Jean Paul Marat!” and in spite of himself he recoiled a step.

“Thou seest, Albertine,” said Marat, with a sinister laugh, “that my name has some effect.”

“But why are you here?” said Gilbert quickly. “Why are you in this cellar, lighted only with this smoky lamp? I supposed you were the physician of the Comte d’Artois.”

“Veterinary surgeon for his stables, you mean,” responded Marat. “The Prince has emigrated. No more Prince, no more stables. No more stables, no more surgeon. Besides, I had sent in my resignation. I don’t wish to serve tyrants!” and the dwarf drew himself up to the full height of his short stature.

"But why in this hole, in this cellar?" persisted Gilbert.

"Why, Monsieur Philosopher? Because I am a Patriot, because I write to denounce the ambitious, because Bailly fears me, because Necker execrates me, because Lafayette tracks me, — because he would have me tracked by the National Guard, because he has set a price on my head, — the ambitious fellow, the dictator! But I defy him. From the depths of my cavern I follow him up, I denounce him, — the dictator! You know what he is doing?"

"No," said Gilbert innocently.

"He is having made, in the Faubourg Saint Antoine, fifteen thousand snuff-boxes, each with his portrait. There is something behind that I believe, — *hein!* I beseech all good citizens to smash them whenever they are able to get hold of them. They will find them somehow the password of a Royalist plot; for you are not ignorant how Lafayette conspires with the Queen, while poor Louis Sixteenth sheds scalding tears over the follies the Austrian makes him commit."

"With the Queen?" said Gilbert, thoughtfully.

"Yes, with the Queen. You cannot pretend to say that she is not conspiring? Why, in these latter days she has distributed so many white cockades that white ribbon has risen three sous an ell. This is sure, for I have it from one of the workgirls of Madame Bertin, — the Queen's milliner, her prime minister, who said, *I have been at work this morning with her Majesty.*"

"And where do you denounce all this?" asked Gilbert.

"In my journal, in the journal which I have just founded, and of which I have already published twenty numbers, — in 'The Friend of the People, or the Parisian

Publicist,' — a journal political and impartial. In order to pay for the paper and the presswork of the first numbers, — hold ! look behind you, — I have sold everything except the sheets and coverlids of the bed where your son is lying."

Gilbert did turn, and saw that little Sebastien indeed lay on the frayed ticking of a mattress, absolutely bare, where he was falling asleep, overcome by grief and fatigue.

The Doctor drew near the youth, to see if his slumber was not a fainting fit ; but reassured by his respiration, easy and regular, he returned to this man, who inspired him with something of the same interest that would have been roused by the exhibition of some savage beast, a tiger or a hyena.

"And who are your colaborers in this gigantic work ?"

"My colaborers?" said Marat. "Ha, ha ! Turkeys march in groups ; the eagle soars alone. My colaborers ? Here they are !" And he showed his head and hands.

"You see that table?" he continued. "It is the workshop of Vulcan, — the comparison is well founded, is it not ? — where he forges the thunder. Every night I write eight pages octavo, which they sell in the morning ; eight pages, and frequently that is not enough, and I double the size. Sixteen pages are not enough ; and though I begin in large type, I almost always finish with small. Other journalists write at intervals, have assistance and relief, but I, never. 'The Friend of the People,' — you can see a copy, there it lies, — 'The Friend of the People' comes entirely from my own hand. It is not simply a journal, — no, it is a man ! It is a personality, it is myself !"

"But how can you get through such an enormous amount of work?" asked Gilbert.

"Ah, there is one of nature's secrets. That is a compact between Death and myself. I give Death ten years of my life, and he accords me certain days when I have no need of rest, certain nights when I have no need of sleep. My life is a unity, it is simple, — I write. I write by night, I write by day. Lafayette's police compel me to live concealed, shut up. This frees me, body and soul, for work. This doubles my activity. This life provoked me at first, but now I am at home in it. It pleases me to contemplate the miserable world through the contracted and crooked opening of my cellar, through its damp and dark vent-hole. Out of the depths of my obscurity I rule the world of the living. I judge science and politics, without asking permission. With one hand I demolish Newton, Franklin, Laplace, Lavoisier. With the other I shake up Bailly, Necker, Lafayette. I upset them all, — yes, as Samson overthrew the temple; and beneath the fragments, which will perhaps overwhelm myself, I may entomb royalty also."

Gilbert shivered in spite of himself. This man repeated to him, in a cavern, under rags of misery, almost precisely what Cagliostro, in a brodered suit, had said to him in a palace.

"But why, popular as you are," said he, "have you not tried to have yourself nominated to the National Assembly?"

"Because the time has not yet come!" replied Marat. Then he added almost immediately, with an expression of regret: "Oh, if I could be Tribune of the people, if I could be sustained by thousands of determined men, I would answer for it, that in six weeks the Constitution would be perfect, that the political machine would work

better, that no rascal would dare to interfere with it, that the nation would be free and happy, that in less than a year she would become flourishing and strong, and remain so as long as I live."

In Gilbert's presence this vainglorious creature was transfigured. His eyes were filled with blood. His tawny skin was bathed in sweat. The monster was grand in his ugliness, as another might be grand in his beauty.

He went on, taking up the thought where it had been interrupted by his enthusiasm: "Yes, but I am not Tribune, and I have not the thousands of backers whom I need; no, but I am a journalist! I have my desk, my paper, my quills, — I have my subscribers, my readers, for whom, I am an oracle, a prophet, a seer. I have my people whose friend I am; and whom I lead, all of a tremble, from treason to treason, from discovery to discovery, from fright to fright. In the first number of 'The Friend of the People,' I denounced the aristocrats. I said there were six hundred criminals in France, for whom six hundred rope's-ends would suffice. Ah ha! I was somewhat mistaken a month ago. The Fifth and Sixth of October have come since then, and have cleared my vision. It is no longer six hundred culprits who should be judged; it is ten thousand, twenty thousand aristocrats who ought to be hanged."

Gilbert smiled. Fury, when it reaches such a point, appears like foolery.

"Be careful," said he, "or there will not be hemp enough in France for your requirements, and rope will advance in price."

"Then I hope we shall find new expedients," said Marat. "Do you know whom I expect to-night, — who will rap at the door in about ten minutes?"

"No, Monsieur."

"Well, I expect one of my confrères, — a member of the National Assembly whom you know by name, — the Citizen Guillotin."

"Yes," replied Gilbert, "he who proposed to the Deputies to reunite in the Tennis Court, when they were driven from the Hall of Assembly, — a very learned man."

"Well, do you know what he has discovered, this Citizen Guillotin? He has invented a marvellous machine, a machine which kills without causing pain, — for it is necessary that death should be punishment, not torture. He has invented such a machine, and some morning we will try it."

Gilbert shuddered. This was the second time that this man, in his cellar, had reminded him of Cagliostro. This machine was, without a doubt, the same whereof Cagliostro had spoken.

"Now then!" said Marat, as some one knocked. "It is he. — Go and open the door, Albertine, — open it!"

The wife, or rather the female Marat, rose from the stool whereon she was crouched, half-asleep, and advanced mechanically and tottering towards the door.

As to Gilbert, stupefied, terrified, a prey to astonishment which resembled vertigo, he ran instinctively to the side of Sebastien, whom he prepared to lift in his arms, in order to carry him home.

"You will see," continued Marat, enthusiastically, "a machine whose function is unique, which needs nobody to wield it, which can, by thrice changing the knife, sever three hundred heads a day."

"And add," said a mild and flute-like voice behind Marat, "which can cut off three hundred heads without pain, with no other sensation than a slight coolness around the neck."

"Ah, it is you, Doctor," cried Marat, turning towards a small man, forty or forty-five years old, whose neat attire and mild air were in strange contrast with Marat's, and who carried in his hand a box of the shape and dimensions of those used for children's playthings. "What have you there?"

"A model of my famous machine, my dear Marat. But if I do not err," added the little man, trying to distinguish him in the obscurity, "it is Doctor Gilbert whom I see there."

"Himself, Monsieur," said Gilbert bowing.

"Enchanted to meet you, Monsieur. You are not one too many, thank God, and I should be glad to have the advice of a man so distinguished as yourself, as to the invention I have brought to light; for I must tell you, my dear Marat, that I have found a very skilful carpenter, one Master Guidon, who is to make me a large-sized machine. It is expensive, — he wants five thousand five hundred francs, — but no sacrifice is too costly for the good of humanity. In two months it will be finished, my friend, and we shall be able to try it. Then I will offer it to the National Assembly. I hope you will indorse the proposition in your excellent journal. Although indeed my machine recommends itself, Monsieur Gilbert, as you shall judge with your own eyes, yet a few lines in 'The Friend of the People' will do it no harm."

"Be easy about that. It is not a few lines which I shall consecrate to this subject, but a whole number."

"You are too good, my dear Marat; but, as they say, you can't sell a cat in a bag."

From his pocket he drew a second box, one fourth smaller than the first, from which proceeded a little noise, as if it were inhabited by some animal, or rather by several animals, impatient of their prison.

This sound did not escape the subtile ear of Marat.
 "What have we inside?" he asked.

"You shall see," said the Doctor.

Marat took the box in his hand.

"Be careful," said the Doctor, quickly, "be careful! Don't let them escape, for we can't trap them again. They are mice, whose heads we are to amputate. What are you doing, Doctor Gilbert? You will not leave us?"

"Alas, yes, Monsieur," responded Gilbert, "and to my great regret; but my son, who was wounded this evening, by a horse which knocked him down in the street, has been relieved, bled, and tended by Doctor Marat, to whom I already owed my own life, under similar circumstances, and to whom I renewedly present my acknowledgments. The lad has need of a fresh bed, of repose, of various attentions. I shall not be able to assist in your interesting experiments."

"But you will assist in our greater experiment, two months hence? You will promise me that, Doctor?"

"I promise you that, Monsieur."

"I shall hold you to your word, you understand?"

"It is given."

"Doctor," said Marat, "there is no need to ask you to keep secret the place of my retreat?"

"Oh Monsieur!"

"If your friend Lafayette should discover it, he would have me shot like a dog or hanged like a thief."

"*Shoot! hang!*" cried Guillotin. "We shall make an end of all such cannibalistic deaths. We are going to have a death pleasant, easy, instantaneous, — such a death as old men, disgusted with life, who would end it like philosophers and sages, would prefer to a natural death. Come and see, my dear Marat, come and see!"

Without concerning himself further with Gilbert,

Guillotin opened the larger box, and began to arrange the machine on the table of Marat, who inspected it with a curiosity equal to his enthusiasm.

Gilbert profited by their preoccupation to lift the sleeping Sebastien, and carry him out in his arms. Albertine accompanied them as far as the door, which she fastened carefully behind them.

Once in the street, Gilbert felt, by the coolness of his face, that he was covered with perspiration, and that the night wind was already congealing the moisture on his forehead.

"Oh my God," he muttered, "what will come into this city from its caverns, which perhaps conceal five hundred philanthropists at this very hour, each busy with devices similar to the one I have just seen, and which some day will flaunt themselves under the light of heaven."

CHAPTER XV.

CATHERINE.

It was but a few steps from the Rue Sourdière to the house where Gilbert lived in the Rue Saint Honoré.

This house was situated not very far from the Church of the Assumption, and opposite the establishment of a joiner named Duplay.

The cold and motion awakened Sebastien. He wished to walk, but his father was opposed to this, and continued to carry him in his arms.

Arrived at the door the Doctor set Sebastien for an instant on his feet, and rapped loudly, that he might not be obliged long to wait, even if the porter was asleep.

Presently a heavy but rapid step was heard on the other side of the door.

"Is it you, Monsieur Gilbert?" demanded a voice.

"Hist!" said Sebastien, "that is Pitou's voice."

"Ah, God be praised!" cried Pitou, opening the door. "Sebastien is found!"

Then turning towards the stairway, in whose shadows might be perceived the light of a candle, he shouted, "Monsieur Billot, Monsieur Billot, Sebastien is found again, — and without accident, I hope, — is it not so, Monsieur Gilbert?"

"Without serious accident, at least," said the Doctor. "Come, Sebastien, come!"

Leaving to Pitou the care of fastening the door, he lifted the boy anew, — in the face and eyes of the abashed

concierge, who appeared on the threshold of the lodge, in a cotton nightcap and nightshirt, and began to mount the staircase.

Billot walked ahead, lighting the Doctor. Pitou filled up the passage behind them.

The Doctor lodged on the second floor, where the doors, thrown open at their full width, showed that he was expected. He laid Sebastien on his own bed.

Pitou followed, anxious and shy. By the mud which covered his shoes, stockings, and breeches, and speckled the rest of his clothing, it was easy to see that he had newly arrived from a long journey.

In fact, after conducting to her home the weeping Catherine, after learning from the young girl's own mouth — for she was too deeply prostrated to conceal her grief — that this grief was caused by the departure of Isidore de Charny for Paris, Pitou felt his heart doubly bruised, both as a friend and a lover, by her sorrowful expression. Taking leave of Catherine in her chamber, and of Mother Billot crying at the bedside, he set out for Haramont with a much tardier step than that which had brought him thence.

He did not reach Haramont till daybreak, thanks to the slowness of his gait, to the many times he turned to look regretfully at the farmhouse he was leaving behind him, to his great sympathy with Catherine, and to his own sorrow.

Such was his preoccupation, like that of Sextus on finding his dead wife, that Pitou sat a long while on his bed, with listless eyes, and his hands clasped over his knees.

At last he roused himself, like a man who awakens, not from slumber, but from thought. Looking about him he presently saw near a sheet of paper, covered with his own

writing, another leaf, scribbled over with a different hand. He went to the table and found the letter Sebastien had left behind him.

To Pitou's credit be it said, that he forthwith forgot his personal troubles, and could only think of the dangers his friend might encounter in the trip he had undertaken. Regardless of the advantage the lad must have over him, having started the evening before, Pitou nevertheless put himself in pursuit, — confiding in his long legs, — with the hope of overtaking him, if Sebastien, not finding other means of conveyance, was obliged to make the whole journey afoot. Besides, Sebastien would need rest, whereas Pitou could walk steadily on.

Pitou encumbered himself with no baggage whatsoever. He girded his loins about with a leathern belt, which he was wont to use when he had a long tramp before him. Under his arm he carried a four-pound loaf of bread, into which he thrust a sausage. Then, staff in hand, he set forth.

At his ordinary pace Pitou could make a league and a half every hour. By accelerating his steps he could walk two leagues an hour.

Therefore, as he only stopped here and there to drink, to tie up his shoes, and to inquire for tidings of Sebastien, he was only ten hours in reaching the end of the Rue Lagny, at the barrier of Villette; though it took another hour, on account of the blockade of carriages, to go from the Villette barrier to Doctor Gilbert's house. This made eleven hours; and as he started at nine in the morning, he arrived at eight in the evening.

This, it may be remembered, was exactly the time when Andrée carried Sebastien away from the Tuileries, and Doctor Gilbert was closeted with the King. Pitou

therefore found neither Doctor Gilbert nor Sebastien at the house, but he found Billot.

Billot, however, had heard nothing said about Sebastien, nor did he know at what hour Gilbert would come home.

The unhappy fellow was so disturbed that he never thought of talking to Billot about Catherine. His conversation was one long groan over his ill-luck, in not having been in his lodging-place when Sebastien came there the night before.

As he had brought along Sebastien's letter, in order to justify himself, if need be, with the Doctor, he read it over again,—a useless process, for he had already perused and reperused that letter, till he knew it by heart.

Time, therefore, dragged slowly and sadly with Pitou and Billot, from eight o'clock in the evening till two in the morning. It was a tedious six hours; and it had not taken Pitou twice as long to come all the way from Villers Cotterets to Paris.

At two o'clock in the morning the *rat-tat* of the knocker was heard for the tenth time since the arrival of Pitou. At each knock Pitou had precipitated himself down the stairs; and though it was forty steps, Pitou always managed to be down by the time the porter pulled the cord to open the gate; but each time his hope was disappointed, for neither Gilbert nor Sebastien appeared, and he returned to Billot's room slowly and dejectedly.

We have told you how, having descended the last time more precipitately than before, his patience was fully rewarded by seeing the father and son, Gilbert and Sebastien, present themselves together.

Gilbert thanked Pitou, as a brave fellow ought to be

thanked, by a pressure of the hand. Then, as he felt sure that after a trot of eighteen leagues, and a watch of six hours, the traveller needed repose, he wished Pitou good-night, and sent him to bed.

Though his mind was easy about Sebastien, Pitou had nevertheless his confidences for Billot. He therefore made a sign for Billot to follow him upstairs, and Billot did so.

As for Gilbert, he would not confide to anybody else the care of putting Sebastien to bed and watching over him. He examined for himself the bruise on the lad's breast, and applied his ear several times to the lungs. Assured that respiration was perfectly free, he finally lay down on a lounge near the boy, who was not long in falling asleep, although still very feverish.

Very soon, however, thinking of the anxiety which must beset the Comtesse de Charny, knowing the distress he had experienced himself, Doctor Gilbert summoned his valet, and ordered him to carry a letter to the nearest messenger, so that it would reach its address by the earliest delivery, — a letter in which were only these words: "Reassure yourself. The boy is found and is not injured."

Next morning Billot sought permission to enter Gilbert's room, and the permission was of course granted. The goodly face of Pitou appeared smiling behind Billot, whose own expression, as Gilbert noticed, was grave and sad.

"What is it then, my friend, what has happened?" asked the Doctor.

"It is this, Monsieur Gilbert, — that you have done well to keep me here, so long as I could be useful to you and to our country; but while I stay in your Paris, all goes wrong away down there."

One might suppose, from these words, that Pitou had revealed to Billot Catherine's secret, and talked of the affair of the young girl with Isidore. No! The honest heart of the brave commander of the Haramont National Guards relucted at such a disclosure. He had only told Billot that the crops were bad, that the rye had failed, that part of the wheat had been damaged by hail, that the granaries were only half filled, and that he had found Catherine ill, on the road between Villers Cotte-rets and Pisseleu.

Billot was somewhat troubled by the failure of the rye and the destruction of the wheat, but it made him almost sick to hear of Catherine's swoon; for he knew, this sensible Father Billot, that a girl of Catherine's temperament and strength does not faint on the highway, without good reason.

Moreover he had questioned Pitou closely; and though Pitou was reserved in his answers, Billot more than once shook his head, saying: "Well, well, I believe it is time for me to go away down there again."

Gilbert, who by this time had learned for himself how the heart of a father may suffer, understood at once what was passing in Billot's mind, when the latter related to him the news brought by Pitou.

"Go then, my dear Billot," he said to him. "Your farm and your family claim you; but do not forget, in the name of your country, that I shall depend upon you in any case of pressing need."

"Give the word, Monsieur Gilbert, and in a dozen hours I will be in Paris," responded the brave farmer.

Having embraced Sebastien, who, after a restful night, found himself completely out of danger, and having squeezed Gilbert's thin and delicate hand in his own brawny grasp, Billot took the road to his farm,—his

farm which he had quitted for only eight days, but from which he had been absent three months.

Pitou went also, — carrying, as an offering from Doctor Gilbert, twenty-five louis, to aid in clothing and equipping the National Guards of Haramont.

Sebastien remained with his father.

CHAPTER XVI.

A TRUCE.

A WEEK intervened, between the events just recounted and the day when we again take the reader by the hand, and conduct him to the Tuileries, henceforth the principal theatre of the great catastrophes about to take place.

Oh Tuileries, fatal heritage, bequeathed to her descendants, and their successors, by a queen of Saint Bartholomew fame, by the stranger, Catherine de Medicis! Intoxicating palace of Circe, attracting only to devour, what fascination lies in thy yawning porch, whereinto have entered all the crowned fools who wished to be called kings, who believed themselves truly sacred when they slept beneath thy regicidal walls, and whom thou didst vomit forth, one after the other, — corpses without a head, or fugitives without a crown.

In thy stones, chiselled like a jewel of Benvenuto Cellini, abides some fatal malediction; some mortal talisman is buried beneath thy threshold. Count the last kings whom thou hast received, and say what thou hast done with them!

Of those five kings, one only didst thou peacefully surrender to the grave which awaited him in the tombs of his ancestors. Of the other four, whom history reclaims at thy hands, one was delivered to the scaffold, and three were sent into exile.

Once upon a time a whole Assembly wished to brave the peril, and establish themselves in the kingly place,

there to sit as proxies of the nation, where the elect of the monarchy had been enthroned. From that moment they were seized with the vertigo. From that moment they destroyed themselves. The scaffold devoured some; exile absorbed others; and one strange fraternity reunited Louis Sixteenth and Robespierre, Collot d'Herbois and Napoleon, Billaud Varennes and Charles Tenth, Vadier and Louis Philippe.

Oh Tuileries, Tuileries! mad indeed must he be who dares to cross thy threshold, and enter where Louis Sixteenth, Napoleon, Charles Tenth, and Louis Philippe entered; for a little sooner or a little later he will go out by the same door.

Oh funereal palace, each of these rulers entered thy precincts amidst the acclamations of the populace; and thy double balcony saw them, one after the other, smilingly respond to those acclamations, believing in the cheers, and the vows of the crowd who uttered them. Hardly were they seated on the royal dais than each one of them set himself to work for his own ends, instead of doing the work of the public; and as soon as the public perceived this, these rulers were put out of doors like unfaithful stewards, or punished like ungrateful agents.

Thus, after that terrible march on the Sixth of October, in the midst of the mire of blood and turmoil, the next day's pale sun saw, at its rising, the courtyard of the Tuileries filled with people, stirred by the King's return, and famished for a sight of him.

Louis the Sixteenth received the regular corporations throughout the day. While this was going on, the crowd waited outside, looking for him, and peering through the window-panes. If one fancied he caught sight of the King he uttered cries of joy, and pointed him out to his neighbor, saying: "See him? See him? There he is!"

At noon it was thought best for the King to show himself on the balcony, and the bravos and plaudits were unanimous.

In the evening he came down into the garden, and there was no end to the cheers and applause; and there were even tears and sentiment.

Madame Elizabeth, with her young heart, — affectionate and ingenuous, — pointed to the crowd, saying to her brother: "It seems to me that it cannot be difficult to reign over such men."

Her rooms were on the ground floor. In the evening she had the windows thrown open, and ate in public.

Men and women looked on, and applauded and saluted through the openings, — especially the women, who made their children climb to the window-ledges, bidding the little innocents throw kisses to the grand lady, and tell her how beautiful she was; and the children threw kisses, without number and without end, from their plump hands, and repeated: "You are very beautiful, Madame!"

Everybody said: "The Revolution is finished. The King is freed from his Versailles, his courtiers, and his counsellors. The spell is broken, which held royalty captive so far from his capital, in that world of automats, statues, and artificially shapen yew-trees, which is called Versailles. Thanks to God, the King is replaced amidst life and truth, — that is to say, amidst genuine human nature. Come, Sire, come among us. Until to-day, surrounded as you were, your only liberty was the liberty to act wrongly. To-day, amidst ourselves, in the midst of your people, you will have all liberty for doing good."

Often the masses, as well as individuals, deceive themselves as to what they are, or rather as to what they will be. The fear roused by the events of the Fifth and Sixth

of October not only restored to the King a multitude of hearts, but also united to him many minds and many interests. The imagination of honest people was strongly impressed with these shouts in the evening, the watch at midnight, the bonfires burning in the Marble Court, illuminating with their weird reflections the grand walls of Versailles.

The Assembly was in greater fear when the King was threatened, than when itself menaced. It seemed then to be dependent upon the King; but six months had not rolled away before the Assembly felt, on the contrary, that the King was dependent on itself. One hundred and fifty members took out passports; and Mounier and Lally — the son of that Lally who died in the Place de Grève — saved themselves.

The two most popular men in France returned to Paris as Royalists, — Lafayette and Mirabeau.

Mirabeau said to Lafayette: "Let us unite, and save the King."

Unfortunately Lafayette — a pre-eminently honest man, but possessing a limited intellect — mistook Mirabeau's character, and did not understand his genius, while he disliked the Duc d'Orléans.

Many things were said about his Royal Highness. It was said that during that dreadful night the Duke was seen, with his hat pulled down over his eyes and a cane in his hand, stirring up the groups in the Marble Court, and urging them to pillage the palace, in the hope that this pillage would be at the same time an assassination.

To Orleans, Mirabeau was everything.

Lafayette, instead of attending to Mirabeau, went to find Orleans, and invited him to quit France. He debated, quarrelled, was obstinate; but Lafayette was virtually King, and the Duke had to obey.

"And when shall I return?" he demanded of Lafayette.

"When I tell you it is time to return, my Prince," responded Lafayette.

"And what if I am bored, and return without your permission?" inquired the Duke, superciliously.

"Then," responded Lafayette, "I hope that your Highness will do me the honor to fight with me the day after your return."

The Duke departed, and did not return till he was sent for.

Lafayette was hardly a Royalist before the Sixth of October, but after the Sixth of October he became one really and sincerely. He had saved the Queen and protected the King.

The services we confer, rather than the favors we receive, attach us strongly to our friends, because there is more pride than gratitude in the human heart.

The King and Madame Elizabeth were really touched, though they felt that there was hidden below the mass of the people, and perhaps above them also, a fatal element, — something hateful and vindictive, like the wrath of a tiger, which snarls while it caresses.

It was not so with Marie Antoinette. The wrong disposition of her woman's heart misled her intelligence as the Queen. Her tears were tears of spite, disappointment, jealousy. The tears she shed were more for Charny, whom she felt slipping from her arms, than for the sceptre she felt slipping from her hand.

She therefore saw the people and heard their cries with a tearless heart and an irritable spirit. She was in reality younger than Madame Elizabeth, or rather about the same age; but a pure soul and body had woven for Madame Elizabeth a robe of innocence and bloom she never lost; while the fiery passions of the Queen, her

hatred and her love, made her hands yellow like ivory, pinched her wan lips over her teeth, and spread beneath her eyes those dark violet lines which reveal a malady deep, incurable, constant.

The Queen was really ill, seriously ill, sick with a disease one cannot conquer, because the sole remedy is happiness and peace; and poor Marie Antoinette felt that for her there was no happiness, no peace.

In the midst of all these outbursts, all these shouts, and all these *vivas*, when the King offered his hands to the men, when Madame Elizabeth laughed and wept at the same time, with the women and their little ones, the Queen's eyes were bedewed with her own selfish grief while by herself, but remained dry in the presence of the public rejoicings.

The destroyers of the Bastille were presented to her, and she refused to receive them.

The Dames of the Market-place came in their turn, and she received them, but at a distance, separated from them by an array of skirts, — her women being arranged round about her like an advance guard, to defend her from vulgar contact.

This was a great mistake on her part. The Dames of the Market-place were Royalists, and many of them utterly repudiated the Sixth of October. These women also spoke to her, for in such groups there are always orators.

One woman, bolder than the rest, constituted herself a counsellor. "Madame Queen," said this woman, "will you allow me to give you one piece of advice, a warning which is perhaps very impudent, but which comes from the heart?"

The Queen made an imperceptible sign with her head, which the woman did not see.

"You do not answer?" she resumed. "Never mind! I will give it, all the same. You are here among us, in the midst of your people, — that is, in the bosom of your true family. It is therefore proper that you should send away from you all these courtiers, who ruin kings, and be somewhat amiable to us poor Parisians, who have seen you only perhaps four times, though you have been twenty years in France."

"Madame," responded the Queen, dryly, "you speak thus because you know not my heart. I have loved you at Versailles, and I shall love you the same in Paris."

This was not promising much!

Another spokeswoman said: "Yes, yes, you loved us at Versailles! It was perhaps out of love that, on the Fourteenth of July, you wished to besiege our city, and have it bombarded. It was love that made you wish, on the Sixth of October, to flee to the frontiers, under the pretext of going at midnight to the Trianon?"

"That is to say," replied the Queen, "it was so reported, and you believed it. That is what often makes mischief for both people and King."

Presently there came to her — poor woman! or rather poor Queen! — a happy inspiration, in the very midst of the struggles of her pride and the distractions of her heart.

One of these dames, an Alsatian by birth, addressed her in German.

The Queen responded: "Madame, I have become so thoroughly French that I have forgotten my maternal tongue."

This was a charming thing to say, but unhappily it was not true.

The Dames of the Market-place went away crying "God save the Queen!" but they went away crying thus with their lips, but growling between their teeth.

That night the royal family being together, — doubtless for mutual consolation, and to strengthen each other, — the King and Madame Elizabeth recalled everything they had found pleasant and comforting in the people. The Queen had but one fact to add to all the rest, and that was a jest of the Dauphin, which she repeated several times, both that day and the day following.

Hearing the disturbance made by the Dames of the Market-place, as they came into the apartments, the poor little fellow ran to his mother and pressed against her crying: "Good Heaven, mamma, is to-day another yesterday?"

The little Dauphin was there. He heard what his mother said about him. Proud, like all children who see that others specially notice them, he went up to the King and looked at him pensively.

"What is it, Louis?" asked the King.

"I wish to ask something very serious, my father," replied the Dauphin.

"Well," said the King, taking him between his knees, "what wilt thou ask? Come, speak out!"

"I want to know," continued the child, "why your people, who used to love you so much, are all at once so displeased with you, and what you have done to make them so very angry."

"Louis!" remonstrated the Queen, with an accent of reproach.

"Let me answer him," said the King.

Madame Elizabeth smiled at the child.

Louis Sixteenth took his son on his knees, and said, putting the politics of the day on a level with the child's apprehension: "My boy, I wished to make the people happier than they were. I needed money to pay the expenses occasioned by our wars. I demanded

it of the Parliament, as all other kings, my predecessors, had done. The magistrates who make up my Parliament were opposed to this, and said that the whole people only had the right to vote me money. I called together at Versailles the chief citizens of each city, prominent by birth, fortune, and talent. This is what is called the States General. When they had assembled, they demanded some things which I could not do, either for my own sake, or for yours, who will be my successor. Well, there were certain wicked fellows who excited the people ; and the excesses to which the populace have gone, in these last few days, is the work of those mischief-makers. My son, it will not do to be angry with the people too much ! ”

At this closing recommendation Marie Antoinette compressed her lips. It was evident, if entrusted with the training of the Dauphin, it would not be towards forgetfulness of injuries that she would direct his education.

The next day the city magnates and the National Guard sent to beg the Queen to appear at a theatrical spectacle, and to show by her presence, and the King's, that they resided in their capital with pleasure.

The Queen responded that she should take great pleasure in accepting the invitation of the City, but that she must have time to lose her recollections of the days recently past. The people had already forgotten those days, and were astonished that she remembered them.

When the Queen learned that her enemy, the notorious Orleans, had left Paris, she had a moment of joy ; but she did not know how much she was indebted to Lafayette for that withdrawal, and believed it was a purely personal affair between the Prince and the General ; or else she pretended to believe it, not wishing to owe anything to Lafayette.

A veritable Princess of the House of Lorraine in rancor and haughtiness, she wished either for conquest or revenge.

"Queens cannot be drowned!" said Madame Henrietta of England, in the midst of a tempest; and Marie Antoinette was of Madame Henrietta's opinion.

Besides, was not Maria Theresa nearer to death than herself, when she took her infant in her arms, and showed the babe to her faithful Hungarians? This heroic memory of the mother influenced her daughter. This was a blunder, however, — a terrible blunder on the part of those who compared the situations of the two women, without using good judgment. Maria Theresa had the people with her. Marie Antoinette had them against her.

Then the latter was, before everything else, a woman. Alas! Perhaps she would have better understood the situation, if her heart had been more at peace. Perhaps she would not have hated the people so much, if Charny had loved her better.

Thus we see what was taking place at the Tuileries during those days when the Revolution came to a standstill, when heated passions cooled away; when as during a truce, friends and enemies shake hands, only to begin a new and more furious combat, a more deadly battle, at the first proclamation of war.

This combat was the more probable, this battle more certain, not only because of what was to be seen on the surface of society, but more because of all that was plotting in its depths.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE PORTRAIT OF CHARLES THE FIRST.

For a few days, while the new hosts at the Tuileries were getting themselves well established and resuming their customary habits, Gilbert did not judge it proper to present himself at the King's apartments, not being summoned thereto ; but at last his regular visiting-day came round, and he believed duty might furnish an excuse he should not dare to claim for his devotion.

As the same household attendants had followed the King from Versailles to Paris, Gilbert was as well known in the antechambers of the Tuileries as in those of Versailles. Besides, though the King had not needed to send for the Doctor, he had not forgotten him.

Louis the Sixteenth had too discriminating a spirit not to easily distinguish his friends from his enemies. Despite the Queen's prejudice against Gilbert, the King felt, at the bottom of his heart, that even if Gilbert was not specially the friend of the King, he was the friend of royalty, which was worth quite as much.

He therefore remembered that this was Gilbert's visitation-day, and gave orders that the Doctor should be at once admitted to the royal presence on his arrival. Consequently, hardly had he crossed the threshold when the lackey in attendance arose and went before him, to introduce him into the King's bed-chamber.

The King was walking up and down, so preoccupied that he took no heed of the Doctor's entrance, as he had

not noticed the announcement which heralded him. Gilbert therefore stood in the doorway, quiet and silent, waiting for the King to mark his presence and speak to him.

It was easy to see what object filled the King's mind, for he more than once paused pensively before that object. This was the full-length portrait of Charles the First, painted by Vandyck, — the portrait now in the Louvre Palace, which some Englishman offered to cover over with gold pieces, if it was to be sold.

Everybody knows this portrait, if not on canvas, at least in engravings.

Charles the First is on foot, beneath some slender and sparse trees, like those which grow on the seashore. A page is holding his horse, all caparisoned. The sea forms the horizon.

The King's face is stamped with melancholy. Of what was this Stuart thinking, — that he had for a predecessor the beautiful and unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots, or that he should have James the Second for a successor? Or rather, of what was the painter thinking, that man of genius, when he thus depicted, on the physiognomy of the King, the overflow of his thought? Of what did he think when he prophetically painted Charles as he was in the last days of his life, — as a simple Cavalier, ready to take the campaign against the Roundheads? Why did he thus paint him as driven to the stormy shore of the North Sea, with his horse at his side, ready for the attack, but ready likewise for flight? If the picture was turned about, into which Vandyck conveyed so deep a tinge of sorrow, would there be found on the reverse of the canvas the outlines of the scaffold at Whitehall?

The voice from the canvas must have spoken very distinctly, to be heard by the material nature of Louis

Sixteenth, — whose countenance it darkened, as a passing cloud casts its shadow on green fields and golden harvests.

Three times he interrupted his promenade to stand in front of the picture ; and three times with a sigh he resumed his walk, which seemed always, and fatally, to bring him face to face with the picture.

At last Gilbert realized that there are circumstances under which it is less indiscreet to announce one's presence than to remain mute.

He made a movement. Louis Sixteenth started and turned. "Ah, it is you, Doctor?" he said. "Come in, come in ; I am glad to see you."

Gilbert came towards him, bowing.

"How long have you been here, Doctor?"

"Some ten minutes, Sire."

"Ah!" said the King, meditating again. Then, after a pause, leading Gilbert in front of Vandyck's masterpiece, he asked : "Doctor, do you know that portrait?"

"Yes, Sire."

"Where have you seen it?"

"When a lad, at Madame Dubarry's ; but boy as I was at the time, it impressed me strangely."

"Yes, at Madame Dubarry's, — even so!" murmured the King.

After another pause of several seconds he asked : "Do you know the history of that portrait, Doctor?"

"Does your Majesty mean the history of the King it represents, or the history of the portrait itself?"

"I referred to the history of the portrait."

"No, Sire. I know that it was painted in London, about 1645 or 1646. That is all I can say. I do not know how it came to France, and how it happens just now to be in the chamber of your Majesty."

"How it came into France, I can tell you. How it happens to be here, at this time, I do not myself know."

Gilbert looked at Louis Sixteenth in surprise.

"It came into France in this wise," repeated the King. "I can tell you nothing very new about that matter, but I know many of the details. You understand why I paused in front of that portrait, and of what I was thinking as I stood there?"

Gilbert bowed his head, as a sign that he was listening attentively.

"There was in France, about thirty years ago," began Louis, "an administration fatal to France, — and above all to myself," he added, sighing over the memory of his father, whom he had always believed poisoned by the Austrians. "That minister was Choiseul. It was decided to supersede him by Aiguillon and Maupeou, and at the same time to suppress the Parliament. This destruction of Parliament was a measure strongly repugnant to my grandfather, King Louis Fifteenth. For the dissolution of Parliament he needed a will-power which he had lost. Out of the remains of his old manhood, it was necessary to construct a new manhood; and in order to make a new man of an old one, there was only one way. This was to close up the shameful seraglio which, under the name of the Deer Park, had cost France so much money and the monarch so much popularity. Instead of a flock of young girls, among whom he wasted his virility, it was necessary to give Louis Fifteenth a single mistress, who would take the place of all the others, — one who would not have enough influence to make him follow a certain political course, but would have enough memory to continually repeat to him a lesson she had well learned. The old Marshal Richelieu knew where to search for such women. He looked where they were to be found, and

found one. You knew her, Doctor, for just now you said you saw this portrait at her house."

Gilbert assented.

"We did not like this woman, either the Queen or myself, — the Queen less than myself; for the Queen, an Austrian, — instructed by Maria Theresa in the great European scheme of politics of which Austria is the centre, — saw in the advent of Aiguillon the downfall of her friend Choiseul. We did not like her, as I say. However, I must do her the justice to add, that in destroying the existing state of things she acted in accordance with my personal wishes, and also — I can conscientiously say it — for the general good. She was a born actress. She played her part marvellously well. She surprised Louis Fifteenth by a familiar audacity heretofore unknown to royalty. She amused him with her raillery; and made a man of him, by making him believe himself a man."

The King here suddenly paused, as if he reproached himself for the imprudence of talking thus about his grandfather in the presence of a stranger; but glancing at the free and open face of Gilbert, he saw that he could speak plainly to this man, who so well knew how to take everything.

Gilbert surmised what was passing in the King's mind, and he waited without impatience, without a question, exposing his face fearlessly to the King's most scrutinizing glance.

"Perhaps I ought not to tell you what I have, Monsieur," said Louis Sixteenth, with a certain nobleness of gesture not habitual with him, "because this is my private thought, and a king ought not to exhibit the bottom of his heart, except to those whose inmost mind he also can read; but give me your word, Monsieur Gilbert, that if

the King of France tells you all his thoughts, you, on your part, will say all that you think."

"Sire, I swear to you," said Gilbert, "if your Majesty does me such an honor, I will render him a like service. The physician has charge of the body, as the priest has charge of the soul; but however voiceless and impenetrable to others, I should deem it a crime not to speak the truth to my King, when he honors me by requesting it."

"And never a lapse, Monsieur Gilbert?"

"Sire, if you should tell me that within a quarter-hour I should be put to death, and by your orders, I should not believe it right to escape, unless you said *Flee!*"

"You do well to tell me this, Monsieur Gilbert. With my best friends, even with the Queen, I only talk in whispers; but with you I think aloud."

Then he resumed: "Well, this woman, who knew very well that with Louis Fifteenth one could hardly count on anything except his royal feebleness of will, seldom quitted him, in order to profit by the least appearance of vigor. She even went with him to the Council, and bent over his armchair. In the presence of the Chancellor, and other important personages, before even the old magistrates, she couched at the King's feet, gambolling like a monkey, chattering like a parrot, breathing out Royalty night and day. But this was not all; and this strange Egeria would have wasted her time if, to her evanescent words, Marshal Richelieu had not conceived the idea of adding a body, which would materialize the lesson she so persistently repeated. Under the pretext that the name of the page whom we see in this picture was Barry, the picture was bought for her, as if it had been a family portrait. This melancholy face, which foretells the Thirtieth of January, 1649, was placed in the boudoir of this

woman, and heard their shameless bursts of laughter, and beheld their wanton frolics; and this is the end which it served. In the midst of their sport she took Louis Fifteenth by the head, and pointing to Charles the First she said: 'See there, oh France, — there is a King whose head they cut off, because he was too feeble for his Parliament. Look out for thine own head!' Louis Fifteenth at once dissolved his Parliament, and died tranquilly on his throne. Then we exiled that woman, towards whom we had perhaps been too indulgent. The painting remained in the gallery at Versailles, and I did not dream of ordering it sent hither. How then does it happen to be here? Who told them to bring it? Why does it follow me — or rather, why does it so singularly pursue me — hither?"

Shaking his head sadly Louis added: "Doctor, is there not some fatality beneath all this?"

"Fatality, if the portrait tells you nothing, Sire, but Providence, if it speaks plainly to you."

"How can you think that such a portrait would not speak to one in my situation, Doctor?"

"After the permission to speak to you truthfully, will your Majesty allow me to question him?"

The King seemed to hesitate. "Speak, Doctor!" he presently said.

"Sire, what says the portrait to your Majesty?"

"It tells me that Charles the First lost his head for making war against his people, and that James the Second lost his throne by forsaking it."

"In that case, Sire, the portrait is like myself, — it speaks the truth."

"How so?" demanded the King, looking solicitously at Gilbert.

"Well, since the King permits me to question him, I

would like to ask what he responds to the portrait which speaks to him so faithfully."

"Monsieur Gilbert," replied the King, "I pledge you my faith as a gentleman that I have not yet decided. I shall take counsel with circumstances."

"The people are afraid the King will only think of contest."

Louis nodded, and said: "No, Monsieur, no! I could not fight with my subjects, except with the help of foreigners; and I know the condition of Europe too well to confide in their swords. The King of Prussia offers to enter France with one hundred thousand men; but I understand the ambitious and intriguing spirit of that little kingdom, which tends to become a great monarchy, — which fosters trouble everywhere, hoping, in the midst of the turmoil, that she may absorb a new Silesia. On the other side Austria also puts a hundred thousand men at my disposal; but I do not like my brother-in-law Leopold overmuch, — a Janus with two faces, — a devout philosopher, whose mother, Maria Theresa, had my father poisoned. My brother proposes help from Sardinia and Spain; but I have no confidence in those two powers, led by Artois. He has with him Calonne, the Queen's most cruel enemy, — he who annotated — I have seen the manuscript! — the pamphlet by Madame Lamotte, written against us, on account of that villainous affair of the necklace. I know all that takes place down there in Turin. In the last Council the question was raised of deposing me and appointing a Regent, who would probably be my other dear brother, Provence. Finally, my Cousin Condé proposes to enter France and march on Lyons, although *he might aspire to the throne*. As for Catherine the Great, that is another affair. She confines herself to advice. You understand very well that she is

at dinner, devouring Poland, and that she cannot arise from table before she has finished her repast. She gives me counsel about all that has recently happened, — advice which sounds sublime, but is really ridiculous. ‘Kings,’ she says, ‘ought to pursue their own course, without bothering themselves about the complaints of the people; as the moon travels in its orbit, without paying attention to the baying of dogs.’ It appears that Russian dogs are content to bark; but she had better ask Deshuttés and Varicourt if ours do not bite.”

“The people also fear that the King dreams of flight, of quitting France.”

The King hesitated about answering.

“Sire,” continued Gilbert, smiling, “it is always a mistake to take literally any permission given by a King. I see that I am indiscreet; though in my interrogation I but purely and simply give expression to a fear.”

The King laid his hand on Gilbert’s shoulder.

“Monsieur,” he said, “I promised you the truth, and you shall have it completely. Yes, there has been some question about that; yes, it has been proposed to me; yes, it is the opinion of many of the most loyal advisers about me that I ought to flee; but on the night of the Sixth of October, as she wept in my arms, pressing our two children in her own, while the Queen awaited death with me, she made me swear that I would not flee alone, that we would go together, that we might be saved or die together. I took the oath, Monsieur, and I will keep my word. Therefore we shall not flee; for I know it would be impossible for us to escape together, without being ten times arrested before reaching the frontier.”

“Sire,” said Gilbert, “you see me full of admiration for your Majesty’s equity of mind. Oh, why can France

not understand you as I understand you at this moment ? How the hatred which pursues your Majesty would be allayed, how the dangers which beset you would be lessened ! ”

“ Hatred ? ” said the King. “ Do you believe that my people hate me ? Dangers ? Not taking too seriously the gloomy thoughts inspired by this portrait, I tell you that I believe the most serious dangers are passed. ”

Gilbert regarded the King with a profound feeling of pity.

“ Is this not your own opinion, Monsieur Gilbert ? ” demanded Louis.

“ My opinion, Sire, is that your Majesty has not yet fairly entered the battle, and that the Fourteenth of July and Sixth of October were only the first acts of a terrible drama, which France is yet to perform in the sight of the nations. ”

Louis Sixteenth grew somewhat pale.

“ I hope you deceive yourself, Monsieur, ” said he.

“ I do not deceive myself, Sire. ”

“ How can you be better informed on this point than myself, when I have both my police and my detectives at command ? ”

“ Sire, I have neither police nor detectives ; but in my position I am naturally an intermediary between that which touches heaven and that which hides in the bowels of the earth. Sire, Sire, what we have felt is only the trembling of the earth. It remains for us to fight the fire, the eruption, and the lava from the volcano. ”

“ You say *fight*, Monsieur. Would not *flight* be the better word ? ”

“ I said *fight*, Sire. ”

“ You know my opinion in regard to foreigners. I will never summon them into France, at least unless my life,

— though my own life matters nothing, I am ready to sacrifice that, — at least unless the lives of my wife and my children are in real danger.”

“I would gladly prostrate myself at your feet, Sire, to thank you for such sentiments. No, Sire, foreigners are not needed. Of what good is an outsider, if you cannot depend on your own legitimate resources? You fear being destroyed in the Revolution, do you not Sire?”

“I acknowledge it!”

“Well, there are two methods of saving France and her King at the same time.”

“Speak out, Monsieur, and you will deserve much from both.”

“The first, Sire, is to put yourself at the head of the Revolution, and so guide it.”

“They would drag me along with it, and I do not wish to go whither they lead.”

“The second is to put a bit into the mouth of the Revolution, — a curb solid enough to tame it.”

“What do you call a *bit*, Monsieur?”

“Popularity united with Genius.”

“And who will forge me such a bit?”

“Mirabeau!”

Louis Sixteenth gazed into Gilbert’s face as if he had not heard him correctly.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MIRABEAU.

GILBERT saw that he had a struggle to sustain, but he was prepared.

"Mirabeau," he repeated. "Yes, Sire, Mirabeau!"

The King again looked at the portrait of Charles First, and apostrophized the poetic canvas of Vandyck: "What would have been thy response at such a time, Charles Stuart, if thou hadst felt the earth shaking beneath thy feet, and it had been proposed to thee to lean on Cromwell?"

"Charles Stuart would have refused, and wisely," replied Gilbert, "for there is no resemblance between Cromwell and Mirabeau."

"I know not how things look to you, Doctor," said the King, "but to me there are no degrees in treason. A traitor is a traitor, and I know no difference between one who is faithless in little and one who is faithless in much."

Gilbert replied with the greatest respect, but at the same time with invincible firmness: "Sire, *traitor* is not the name for either Cromwell or Mirabeau."

"What then?" cried the King.

"Cromwell was a rebellious subject, and Mirabeau is a discontented gentleman."

"Discontented with what?"

"With everything, — with his father, who confined him in Château d'If and the dungeon at Vincennes;

with tribunals, which once condemned him to death ; with the King, who has misprised his genius, and still misunderstands him."

"The genius of the politician should be *honesty*," said the King quickly.

"The response is excellent, Sire, — worthy of Titus, Trajan, or Marcus Aurelius ; but, unfortunately, experience gives it the lie."

"How so ?"

"Was Augustus Cæsar an honest man, when he first divided the empire with Lepidus and Antony, and then banished Lepidus and killed Antony, in order to have everything for himself ? Was it honest in Charlemagne to send his brother Carloman to die in a cloister ; and in order to get rid of his enemy, Wittikind, — almost as great a man as himself, — ordered the decapitation of all Saxons taller than his sword. Louis the Eleventh, who rebelled against his father, for the purpose of dethroning him, and filled Charles the Seventh with such a dread of poison that he starved to death, — was Louis Eleventh honest ? Was Richelieu honest in engineering conspiracies in the alcoves of the Louvre and the galleries of the Palace Cardinal, which he afterwards denounced in the Place de Grève ? Was Mazarin an honest man, when he signed a treaty with the Protector, Cromwell, and not only refused a half-million of francs and five hundred men to Charles the Second, but even drove him out of France ? Was Colbert an honest man, when he betrayed, accused, and overthrew Fouquet, his benefactor ; and having thrown him into a living dungeon, from which he never emerged but as a corpse, seated himself, with superb impudence, in his predecessor's armchair, while it was yet warm ? And yet neither of these, thank God, did any wrong to King or kingdom."

"But you know, Monsieur Gilbert, that Mirabeau can be nothing to me, while he is so much to Orleans."

"Ah, Sire, now that Orleans is in exile, Mirabeau belongs to nobody."

"Would you have me trust myself to a man who is for sale?"

"Buy him! Can't you afford to pay more than anybody else in the world?"

"An insatiable fellow, who would ask a million!"

"When Mirabeau sells himself for a million, Sire, he *gives* himself away. Do you fancy him worth less, by two millions, than one of those Polignacs, masculine or feminine?"

"Monsieur Gilbert!"

"The King withdraws his word," said Gilbert bowing, "and I am dumb."

"No, on the contrary, — speak on!"

"I have done, Sire."

"Then let us discuss the matter."

"I ask nothing better, Sire, for I know my Mirabeau by heart."

"You are his friend?"

"Unhappily I have not that honor. Besides, Mirabeau has only one friend who is at the same time a friend of the Queen."

"Yes, La Marck, — I know that. We reproach ourselves for it every day."

"Your Majesty ought rather to forbid him from ever quarrelling with Mirabeau, under penalty of death."

"And what importance would be derived, think you, from having a lordling like Riquetti Mirabeau in the weight of public affairs?"

"First, Sire, permit me to say that Mirabeau is a nobleman, not a lordling. There are few noblemen in

France who date back to the Eleventh Century ; and to have more noblemen about them, our kings have only insisted that the titles of these gentlemen should be proved as far back as 1399, in order to concede them the honor of riding in their carriages. No, Sire, he is no parvenu. He descends from the Arrighetti of Florence, one of whom came to France, after a defeat by the Ghibelline party, and established himself in Provence. A man is not a commoner because he has had a commercial ancestor in Marseilles ; for you know, Sire, that the nobility of Marseilles, like those of Venice, lost nothing of their distinction by their condescension to trade."

"A debauchee," interrupted the King, "a headsman of reputations, a spendthrift !"

"Ah, Sire, we must take men as nature made them. The Mirabeaus have been always dissipated and disorderly in their youth, but they improve as they grow older. In their youth they are unhappily what your Majesty has said ; but as heads of families they become imperious, haughty, austere. A king who dislikes them would be ungrateful, for they have furnished the army with intrepid soldiers, the navy with brave mariners. In their provincial hatred of all centralization, in their half-feudal and half-republican opposition, I am aware how, entrenched in their strongholds, they brave the authority of ministers, and even kings. I know they have often locked up the treasury officials who came to appraise their estates. I know very well how they confounded with the same disdain, and covered with the same derision, both courtiers and clerks, land-superintendents and literary fellows, and valued only two things in the world, the iron of the sword and the iron of the plow. I know what one of them wrote : 'Toadyism is as natural to Court gentry,

with their putty faces and hearts, as puddles to ducks.' But all that does not affect their rank the least in the world. On the contrary, all this, though it may not be the purest morality, none the less arises from high nobility."

"Well, well, Monsieur Gilbert," said the King with a spice of dissatisfaction ; for he fancied that he knew, better than anybody else, the prominent men of his kingdom, — "well, you say you know your Mirabeau by heart. For my sake, who know him not, keep on. Before engaging men in our service, we like to understand them."

"Yes, Sire," replied Gilbert, spurred by a touch of irony which he discovered in the King's intonation, "and I will tell your Majesty. It was a Mirabeau, Bruno de Riquetti, who — on the day when Feuillade inaugurated, in the square named after it, the statue of Victory, with four nations enchained — was crossing with his regiment (a regiment of the Guards, Sire) the New Bridge ; and who paused, and made his regiment halt in front of the statue of Henry Fourth, and said, doffing his hat : 'My friends, let us salute *this*, for this statue is worth as much as the other.' It was a Mirabeau, François de Riquetti, who, at the age of seventeen, returned from Malta, and found his mother, Anne de Pontèves, in mourning. As his father had been ten years dead, he demanded the cause of her mourning. — 'I have been insulted,' replied the mother. — 'By whom, Madame ?' — 'By the Chevalier de Griasque.' — 'And you have not yet avenged yourself ?' asked François, who understood his mother. — 'I greatly desired revenge. One day I found him alone. I placed a loaded pistol against his temple, and told him that if I were a lone woman I would blow out his brains, as he could see I was able to do, but that I had a son who

would avenge me more honorably.' — 'You did right, my mother,' responded the youth. Without taking off his boots he replaced his hat, once more girded on his sword, and went after the chevalier, a bravo and bully. He provoked him, locked himself up with him in a garden, threw the keys over the wall, and slew him. A Mirabeau it was, Jean Antoine, six feet tall, possessing the beauty of Antinous and the strength of Milo, to whom his grandmother said, in the dialect of Provence : 'You are not of the men ; you belong to the *diminutives*.' Educated by this virago, this Mirabeau had, as his grandson has since stated, an elasticity and vigor almost impossible. A musketeer at eighteen, always under fire, loving danger as others love pleasure, he commanded a legion of terrible fellows, fierce, indomitable like himself, of whom other soldiers said, as they passed by : 'Seest thou those Redcuffs ? They are the *Mirabeauans*, a legion of devils commanded by Satan.' Yet they were wrong in calling the commander Satan, for he was a very pious man, — so pious that one day, a fire having caught in one of his forests, instead of giving orders for an attempt to extinguish it by ordinary means, he had the Holy Eucharist carried thither, and therewith put out the flames. It is true his piety was that of a feudal baron, and that this captain sometimes found his devotion dragged into great embarrassment ; because it chanced one day that some deserters, whom he intended to shoot, had taken refuge in the chapel of an Italian convent. He ordered his men to break down the doors. They were going to obey, when the abbot appeared on the threshold in full pontificals, with the Holy Eucharist in his hands."

"Well, what then ?" asked Louis Sixteenth, evidently captivated by a recital so full of verve and color.

"Well, he stood an instant dumbfounded, for the

position was very embarrassing. Then, brightened by a sudden idea, he ordered his ensign to summon the chaplain of the regiment, to rescue the good God, — that is, the Host of the Sacrament, — ‘out of the hands of that droll fellow there ;’ and this was piously done by the chaplain of the regiment, Sire, relying upon the firelocks of those devils in red trimmings.”

“Indeed, I recollect something of that Marquis Antoine,” said the King. “Is not he the fellow who said to Lieutenant-General Chamillard, — when the General had promised to speak to his brother, the minister Chamillard, on Marquis Antoine’s behalf, after some affair in which this Mirabeau had distinguished himself, — said to the General: ‘Monsieur, your brother is very fortunate in having you, for without you he would be the greatest fool in the kingdom’?”

“Yes, Sire ; and when there was a nomination of field-marshals, Secretary Chamillard was very careful not to put in the Marquis’s name.”

“And what became of this hero, who appears to me to have been the Condé of the Riquetti race?” asked the King, laughing.

“Sire, he who has a splendid life has a splendid death,” responded Gilbert, gravely. “Charged with defending a bridge attacked by the Imperialists, at the battle of Cassano, he made his soldiers lie flat on the ground, as was his custom, while he alone stood erect, offering a point of attraction for the fire of the enemy. The balls began to whistle about him like hail, but he did not budge, any more than a guidepost which indicates the road. One of the balls broke his right arm, — but that was nothing, you understand, Sire. He took his handkerchief, put his right arm into a sling, grasped with the left hand his axe, his ordinary weapon, — mis-

trusting the sabre and the sword as inflicting cuts too small; but hardly had he accomplished this manœuvre than a second shot struck his neck, and severed the jugular vein and the nerves of his throat. This time the difficulty was more serious. However, in spite of this horrible wound, our Colossus still stood upright, till, stifled with blood, he fell on the bridge like an uprooted tree. At sight of this the regiment was discouraged and fled, for with their chief they lost their hearts. An old sergeant, who hoped that he was not quite dead, threw a covering over his face as they passed by; and the whole army of Prince Eugene, cavalry and infantry, crowded over his body, in the wake of the flying regiment. When the battle was over they began to bury the dead. The magnificent uniform of the Marquis attracted attention. One of the captured soldiers recognized him. Seeing that he still breathed, or rather that he gasped with the death-rattle, the Prince ordered him to be taken to the camp of the Duc de Vendôme. This order was fulfilled. They placed the body of the Marquis in the Vendôme's tent, where the famous surgeon Dumoulin happened to be. He was a man full of notions, and undertook to restore this corpse to life, — a feat which appeared impossible. The wound had nearly severed the head from the shoulders, leaving them united only by the spinal column and a few shreds of flesh. Besides this, his whole body, over which three thousand horsemen and six thousand footmen had marched, was full of wounds. For three days it was doubtful if he would ever recover consciousness; but at the end of that time he opened his eyes. Two days later he moved one arm. Finally he seconded the obstinacy of Dumoulin with an equal obstinacy, and at the end of three months he reappeared, with his broken arm supported in a black scarf,

with twenty-seven wounds scattered all over his body, — five more than Cæsar's, — and his head sustained by a silver collar. His first visit was to Versailles, where he was conducted to the Duke, and by him presented to the King, who asked why it was, having given such proof of courage, that he had never been made a field-marshal. 'Sire,' responded Marquis Antoine, 'if I had come to Court and bribed some jade, instead of staying to defend the bridge at Cassano, I should have received greater advancement and fewer wounds.' It was not in such a fashion that Louis Fourteenth liked to be answered, and so he turned his heel on the Marquis. 'Jean Antoine, my friend,' said Vendôme, on the way out, 'henceforth I shall present thee to the enemy, but never to the King. Several months afterwards the Marquis, with his twenty-seven wounds, broken arm, and silver collar, espoused Mademoiselle Castellane-Norante, by whom he had seven children, in the midst of seven new campaigns. Sometimes, though rarely, like all brave men, he spoke of that famous affair at Cassano, and when he did so he used to say: 'That's the battle where I was killed!'"

Louis Sixteenth was visibly amused with this account of Mirabeau's ancestors, and replied: "You have indeed told me how the Marquis Jean Antoine was *killed*, but you have not told me how he *died*."

"He died in the Mirabeau stronghold, a rugged and uncouth retreat, situated on a steep rock, fortifying a double gorge, beaten incessantly by the north wind. He died with that despotic and rude exterior which belongs to the Riquetti family as they grow older, bringing up his children to submission and respect, and keeping them at such a distance that the eldest son said of him: 'I never had the honor of touching the hand, lips, or flesh of that excellent man.' This eldest son was the father of *our*

Mirabeau, — a wild sort of bird, whose nest was made between four turrets, who never would *Versaillesize* himself, to quote his own word, and to whom your Majesty does not render justice, because you do not know him."

"Because I know him better, on the other hand, Monsieur," said the King. "He is one of the chiefs of the Economist School. He took part in the Revolution just accomplished, giving the signal for certain social reforms, popularizing many errors and a few truths; which is the more culpable on his part, because he foresaw the situation, — he who said: 'This is an era when every woman should bear an Artevelde or a Masaniello.' He was not mistaken, and the womb of his own mother bore something worse."

"Sire, there is in Mirabeau something repugnant to your Majesty, or that offends you. Let me say that this is the result of paternal despotism and royal despotism."

"Royal despotism?" echoed the King.

"Undoubtedly, Sire! Without the King, the father could have done nothing. What great crime had been committed by this descendant of a grand race, that at the age of fourteen his father should send him to a School of Correction, where he was registered, in order to humiliate him, not as Riquetti Mirabeau, but under the name of Buffières? What had he done at eighteen, that his father should obtain a secret warrant of arrest, and lock him up in the Island of Ré? What had he done at twenty, that he should be placed in the ranks of a Disciplinary Battalion, and sent to fight in Corsica, with this prediction by his father: 'He will embark, the Sixteenth of April next, on the watery plain which only furrows itself. God grant that he may not some day plow it as a galley-slave!' What did he do, at the

end of a year after his marriage, that his father should banish him to Manosque? Why, at the end of six months' exile at Manosque, was he transferred by his father to the fortress at Joux? Finally, what had he done, after his escape from Joux, that he should be arrested at Amsterdam, and imprisoned in the stronghold at Vincennes, where all the space assigned to him, by paternal clemency and royal clemency, — to *him*, who could hardly find breath in the wide open world, — was a cell ten feet square, where for five years his young manhood fretted and his passion increased, but where at the same time his mind broadened and his heart grew stronger. I will tell you what he did to deserve all this. He captivated his professor, Poisson, by the ease with which he learned everything and comprehended everything. He wound his way through the science of Political Economy. Having chosen a military career, he desired to continue it. Reduced to six thousand francs income, and having a wife and child, he contracted a debt of thirty thousand francs. He left his banishment at Manosque, to chastise an insolent nobleman who had insulted his sister. Finally, — and this was his greatest crime, — yielding to the seductions of a young and pretty woman, he carried her off from a debilitated old husband, morose and jealous."

"Yes, Monsieur," said the King, "to abandon her soon after, in such a way that the unhappy Madame Monnier, left alone with her conscience, committed suicide."

Gilbert raised his eyes to Heaven and sighed.

"Well, let us see what you have to say to that, Monsieur, and how you will defend Mirabeau?"

"With the truth, Sire, with the truth, — which reaches kings with so much difficulty, that you, who seek it, who demand it, who call for it, are almost always ignorant of

it. No, Sire, Madame Monnier did not die because she was abandoned by Mirabeau ; for when he left Vincennes, his first visit was to her. Disguised as a pedler he obtained access to the convent at Gien, where she had sought an asylum. He found Sophie cool and constrained. An explanation followed. Mirabeau not only discovered that Madame Monnier loved him no longer, but that she loved somebody else, the Chevalier de Raucourt, whom she was to marry, being set free by the death of her husband. Mirabeau had left his prison too soon. As they had counted on his captivity, they had now to be content with wounding his honor. Mirabeau conceded his place to his happy rival, and withdrew, while Madame hastened to wed Raucourt, who soon after died very suddenly. The poor woman had staked her whole heart and life on this last affection. A month ago, on the Ninth of September, she locked herself in her closet and suffocated herself. Then Mirabeau's enemies declared that she died because of her abandonment by her first lover, when she really died for love of a second. Oh History, History, thus art thou written !”

“Ah,” said the King, “that is why he received the news with such strange indifference.”

“I can tell your Majesty how he received it, because I know the man who announced it to him, — a member of the Assembly. Ask the man himself ! He dare not lie, for he is a priest, the Abbé Vallet. He sits on the benches opposite those where Mirabeau sits. He crossed the hall and took a seat by Mirabeau's side. ‘What the devil are you doing here ?’ asked Mirabeau. Without other response the Abbé Vallet gave him the letter which contained the fatal news. He opened it, and was a long time reading it, for he could hardly believe it. Then he read it again, and during the second perusal his face

paled and he became discomposed as he went on. He passed his hands over his forehead, wiping his eyes at the same time, coughing, spitting, and trying to gain the mastery over himself. At last he had to give it up. He rose precipitately and went away, and for three days did not appear in the Assembly. Oh Sire, Sire, pardon me for entering into these details; but one need only be a man of ordinary genius to be calumniated at every point and about everything; and it is all the more so when the man of genius is a giant."

"Even if it is so, Doctor, what motive could anybody near me have for calumniating Mirabeau?"

"What interest, Sire? The interest which mediocrity always has to keep its place near the throne. Mirabeau is not one of those men who can enter the Temple without driving away the money-changers. The nearness of Mirabeau to your Majesty would be the death-knell of petty intrigues. His presence would be the banishment of petty intriguers, — his genius tracing the pathway to probity. What matters it to you, Sire, if Mirabeau lived unpleasantly with his wife? What matters it if he eloped with Madame Monnier? What matters it to you if he has a half-million of debts? Pay the half-million of debts, Sire. Add thereto five hundred thousand francs, — a million, two millions, ten millions, if necessary. Mirabeau is now free. Do not let him escape you. Take him. Make him your counsellor. Make him a cabinet minister. Harken to what his potent voice says to you; and what you hear, repeat to your people, to Europe, to the world!"

"Monsieur Mirabeau became a cloth-merchant at Aix, in order to secure a popular nomination to the Assembly. He could not betray his constituents, by forsaking the popular side for that of the Court."

"Sire, Sire ! I repeat to you, you do not know Mirabeau. He is, before all, an aristocrat, a nobleman, a Royalist. He procured an election by the people, because the nobility disdained him, — because there is in Mirabeau that sublime desire to achieve his object by some means, which is the torment of men of genius. He would not have been chosen, either by the nobility or the people, if he had proposed to enter Parliament like Louis Fourteenth, booted and spurred, as if he possessed a divine right there. He would not quit the popular party for the Court party, you say ? Oh Sire, why is there a popular party and a Court party ? Why are not these parties one ? Well, that is what Mirabeau would accomplish. Take Mirabeau, Sire. To-morrow, rebuffed by your indifference, Mirabeau will turn against you ; and then, Sire, then, — I tell you this, and the picture of Charles the First will tell you the same thing hereafter, as it has told you before — then all will be lost."

"Mirabeau will turn against me, you say ? Has he not already done so, Monsieur ?"

"In appearance, perhaps ; but at bottom Mirabeau is really on your side. Ask La Marck what he said to him, after that famous session of the Twenty-first July, when Mirabeau alone read the future, with appalling sagacity."

"Well, what said he ?"

"He twisted his hands in affliction, Sire, and cried : 'It is thus they lead kings to the scaffold !' Three days after he added : 'These fellows do not see what an abyss they are digging under the steps of the monarchy. The King and the Queen will perish, and the people will clap their hands over their dead bodies.'"

The King shivered, grew pale, looked at the portrait of Charles the First, and appeared almost ready to decide ; but suddenly he said : "I will talk with the Queen about

this, and perhaps she may decide to talk with Mirabeau ; but I cannot talk with him myself. I like to shake the hand of the man with whom I talk, Monsieur Gilbert, and I would not press the hand of Mirabeau for the price of my throne, of my liberty, of my life."

Gilbert was about to reply, perhaps to insist further ; but at that instant an usher entered and said : "Sire, the person is here whom your Majesty wished to receive this morning, and is waiting in the antechambers."

Louis made a quick movement, and looked at Gilbert.

"Sire," said the latter, "if it is best for me not to see the person who waits upon your Majesty, I will pass out by another door."

"No, Monsieur," said the King, "go this way. You know I hold you as my friend, and that I have no secrets from you. Besides, the person who waits is a plain gentleman, formerly attached to the household of my brother, who has recommended him to me. He is a faithful servant, and I am going to see if it is possible to do something, if not for him, at least for his wife and children. Go, Monsieur Gilbert, you know you will be always welcome when you come, — even when you come to talk to me about Mirabeau."

"Sire," asked Gilbert, "must I regard myself as completely baffled?"

"I have already told you, Monsieur, that I will talk with the Queen, that I will reflect. Later we will see."

"Later, Sire ! Here, this very instant ! I pray God it may not be too late."

"Ah, do you believe the peril so imminent?"

"Sire," said Gilbert, "do not let that portrait of Charles First be taken from your apartment, for it is your best counsellor."

He withdrew, bowing, just at the moment when the

person expected by the King presented himself at the door, ready to come in.

Gilbert could not repress a start of surprise. This gentleman was the Marquis de Favras, whom he had met eight or ten days before at the house of Cagliostro, and whose speedy and violent death had then been prophesied.

CHAPTER XIX.

FAVRAS.

As soon as Gilbert had withdrawn, — a prey to forebodings, not inspired by the realities of life, but by invisible and mysterious possibilities, — the Marquis de Favras was introduced to the presence of Louis Sixteenth, as related in the preceding chapter.

He paused at the door, as Doctor Gilbert had done, but the King, having seen him enter, made a sign for him to draw nearer.

Favras advanced bowing, but waited respectfully for the King to address him.

Louis fixed on him that investigating look which seems part of the education of kings, and is more or less superficial, more or less profound, according to the genius of him who employs it and applies it.

Thomas Mahi, Marquis de Favras, was a gentleman forty-five years of age, with a tall figure, a bearing elegant and at the same time strong, a frank physiognomy, and an open face.

The examination was favorable, and something like a smile touched the King's lips, already opening to interrogate the newcomer.

"You are the Marquis de Favras, Monsieur?" he asked.

"Yes, Sire," replied the Marquis.

"You have wished to be presented to me?"

"I have expressed to his Royal Highness, Monsieur de Provence, my lively desire to place my services at the feet of his brother, my King."

"My brother has great confidence in you?"

"So I believe, Sire, and I avow that my ardent ambition is to have that confidence shared by your Majesty."

"My brother has known you a long time, Monsieur."

"But your Majesty knows me not! I understand; but if your Majesty deigns to question me, in ten minutes he will know me as well as his august brother knows me."

"Speak, Marquis," said Louis Sixteenth, throwing a side glance at the portrait of Charles Stuart, which would not entirely leave his thoughts, nor at once remove itself from the sweep of his eye, "speak! I am listening."

"Your Majesty wishes to know —?"

"Who you are and what you have done."

"Who I am, Sire? The simple announcement of my name tells you that. I am Thomas Mahi, Marquis de Favras. I was born at Blois in 1745. I joined the Musketeers at the age of fifteen, and fought the campaign of 1761 in that corps. I was afterwards captain and adjutant in the regiment of Belzunce, then lieutenant of the Swiss Guard of Monsieur de Provence."

"And it was in this capacity that you knew my brother?"

"Sire, I had the honor to be presented to him a year before, so that he already knew me."

"And you left that service —?"

"In 1775, Sire, in order to go to Vienna, where I had made the acquaintance of my wife, the legitimate and only daughter of the Prince of Anhalt Schauenbourg."

"Your wife has never been presented at Court, Monsieur?"

"No, Sire ; but at this very moment she has the honor of being with the Queen, together with my eldest son."

The King made a dissatisfied motion, which seemed to say : "Ah, the Queen has a hand in this !"

After a period of silence, which he employed in walking to and fro, and glancing once more, but furtively, at the portrait of Charles the First, the King asked : "And what next ?"

"Next, Sire, for three years, during the insurrection against the Stadtholder of Holland, I commanded a company, and contributed my part towards the re-establishment of legitimate authority. Then turning my attention towards France, and seeing bad blood begin its work of disorganization, I returned to Paris, to place my sword and life at the service of my King."

"Well, Monsieur, you have indeed beheld some pitiable things, have you not ?"

"Sire, I witnessed those two days, the Fifth and Sixth of October."

The King seemed desirous of changing the topic. "Is it not told me, Marquis," he continued, "that my brother of Provence has so much confidence in you that he has charged you with an important loan ?"

At this unexpected question, a third person, had there been a third person present, might have noticed a peculiar motion of the curtain which half enclosed the King's private alcove, as if some one stood concealed behind the tapestry ; and Favras was confused, like a man who is prepared to answer a certain question, but finds himself suddenly confronted by one far different.

"Yes, Sire," he said. "It is a mark of confidence to entrust a gentleman with financial interests ; and that mark of confidence his Royal Highness has done me the honor to give."

The King paused in his promenade, and looked at Favras as if the trend of the interview now offered greater attractions than heretofore.

The Marquis continued, in a disappointed tone : " His Royal Highness has been deprived of his revenues, as a result of different Acts of the Assembly. Thinking the time has come when princes should have a large sum at their disposal, even for their own security, his Royal Highness sent me the contracts, as I said."

" On which you have negotiated a loan, Monsieur ? "

" Yes, Sire."

" A large amount, you say ? "

" Two millions."

" And with whom ? "

Favras almost hesitated to answer the King, inasmuch as the conversation seemed to lose its pith, and pass from great and general interests into the lesser inquiry after particular and personal interests,—to descend from politics to police.

" I ask you who makes this loan," persisted the King.

" Sire, I at first called upon the bankers Schaumel and Sartorius ; but this negotiation having failed, I had recourse to a foreign banker, — one who, knowing the wishes of his Royal Highness, made me voluntary proffers of service, out of love for our Princes and respect for our King."

" Ah ! And you call this banker — ? "

" Sire ! " said Favras, hesitating.

" You will understand, Monsieur," insisted the King, " that such a man it is well to know ; and that I desire to learn his name, in order to thank him for his devotion, should an occasion ever present itself."

" Sire, he is called the Baron Zanonne."

"He is an Italian?"

"A Genoese, Sire."

"And he lives —?"

"At Sevres, Sire, immediately opposite the place," — rejoined Favras, who hoped by this touch of the spur to give more vigor to his foundering cause, — "immediately opposite the place where your Majesty's coach halted on the Sixth of October, on the return from Versailles, when a set of cutthroats, led by Marat, Verrière, and the Duc d'Aiguillon, in a little pothouse at the Sevres Bridge, compelled the Queen's barber to curl and dress the two severed heads of Varicourt and Deshuttet."

The King grew pale; and if at that instant he had turned his eyes towards the alcove, he would have seen the trembling curtain agitate itself a second time, more nervously than before.

It was evident that this conversation annoyed him, and that he wished he had never been led into it.

Resolved to end the subject at once, he said: "It is well, Monsieur! I see that you are a faithful servitor of royalty, and I promise not to forget it, at the proper time;" and he made that movement of the head which signifies, with princes: "I have done you the honor to hear you and talk to you long enough, and you are authorized to take your departure!"

Favras comprehended perfectly, but he said: "Pardon me, Sire, I believe your Majesty had something else to ask me."

"No," said the King, shaking his head slowly, as if he searched his memory for some new questions to ask, "no, Marquis; this is all I wish to know."

"You are mistaken, Monsieur," said a voice which made both King and Marquis turn towards the alcove; "you want to know how the forefather of the Marquis

managed to rescue King Stanislaus from Dantzic, and conduct him safe and sound to the Prussian frontier."

Both men uttered a cry of surprise. This third person, who came so unexpectedly into their conversation, was the Queen, — the Queen pale and trembling, with compressed lips, and not content with the statements furnished by Favras. Doubting if the King, left to himself, would dare to go so far, she had come by the private staircase and the secret corridor, to take up the interview when the King was weak enough, as she firmly believed, to let it drop.

The Queen's intervention, and the fashion in which she turned the conversation, by a reference to the flight of Stanislaus, was to enable the King to hear, under a transparent veil of allegory, certain projects of flight, which Favras had come to propose.

On his part Favras understood in an instant the method she offered him for developing his plan; and although none of his ancestors or kinsmen had ever aided the King of Poland in his flight, he bowed, and hastened to reply.

"Your Majesty doubtless refers to my cousin, General Steinflicht, who owes this illustrative name to the immense service which he rendered his King, — a service which had a fortunate effect over the fate of Stanislaus, first snatching him from the hands of his enemies, and then, by a conjunction of providential circumstances, making him a forefather of your Majesty."

"That's the one, that's the one," said the Queen, quickly; while Louis, with a sigh, inspected anew the portrait of Charles Stuart.

"Well," said Favras, "your Majesty knows — pardon me, Sire, your *Majesties* know — that King Stanislaus, although at liberty in Dantzic, was surrounded on all

sides by the Muscovite army, and almost lost, when he decided upon instant flight."

"Entirely lost," interrupted the Queen, "you may well say *entirely* lost, Monsieur!"

"Madame," said Louis Sixteenth, with some severity, "the Providence which watches over kings, never allows them to be *entirely* ruined!"

"Ah, Monsieur," said the Queen, "I believe as religiously and trustfully as yourself in Providence; but, to my mind, it is a good thing to help Providence a little."

"This was also the mind of the King of Poland, Sire," added Favras, "for he declared positively to his friends, that not believing his position tenable, and believing his life in danger, he wished them to submit several schemes for a flight. In spite of the difficulty, three plans were brought forward. I say *despite the difficulty*, because, as your Majesty may notice, it was far more difficult for King Stanislaus to get away from Dantzic, than it would be for you, for instance, to get out of Paris, if the notion should take you. With a postchaise, — if your Majesty wished to leave without noise and gossip, — with a postchaise, your Majesty would be able in one day to gain the frontier; or, if your Majesty wished to quit Paris in state, you could give orders to some gentleman, honored with your confidence, to raise thirty thousand men, and summon them to the palace, — yes, to the Tuileries. In either case success would be sure, the enterprise certain."

"Sire," added the Queen, "you know that what Monsieur Favras says is the exact truth."

"Yes," said the King; "but my situation, Madame, is far from being as desperate as that of King Stanislaus. Dantzic was surrounded with Russians, as the Marquis said. The fort of Wechsellmund, their last defence, was ready to capitulate; but as for me —"

"As for you," interrupted the Queen with impatience, "you are in the midst of Parisians, — of Parisians who captured the Bastille on July the Fourteenth, who wanted to assassinate you on the night of October Fifth, and who on the next day haled you and your family to Paris by force, insulting them all the time the trip lasted. Ah! The situation is so delightful, that it deserves preference above that of King Stanislaus!"

"But, Madame —"

"King Stanislaus did not risk a prison, and perhaps death; whereas you —"

She was checked by a glance of the King.

"Of course, you are the master," continued the Queen, "and it is for you to decide!" and she sat down impatiently, face to face with the portrait of Charles the First.

"Monsieur de Favras," she presently said, "I have just come from a conversation with your wife and your oldest son. I find them full of courage and resolution, as becomes the wife and son of a gallant gentleman. Whatever happens to them, — supposing anything should happen, — they may count on the Queen of France. The Queen of France will never abandon them. She is the daughter of Maria Theresa, and knows how to appreciate and recompense courage."

The King resumed, stimulated by this sally of the Queen: "You say, Monsieur, that three methods of escape were proposed to King Stanislaus?"

"Yes, Sire!"

"And those methods were —?"

"The first, Sire, was to disguise himself as a peasant. The Comtesse de Chapska, Palatine of Pomerania, who spoke German as if it were her maternal tongue, — confiding in a man who had proved that he knew the country

perfectly well, — offered to disguise herself as a peasant-woman, and let the King pass as her foreign husband. This is the method I referred to just now for the King of France, in telling him what facilities he would have, in case it should be necessary for him to flee incognito and by night.”

“The second?” said Louis, as if he resented with some impatience any attempt to apply to his own situation a comparison with that of King Stanislaus.

“The second, Sire, was to take a thousand men, and risk drilling a hole through the Muscovite ranks. This also I just now suggested to the King of France, in calling his attention to the fact that not one but thirty thousand men might be at his disposal.”

“You saw how I was served by thirty thousand men on the Fourteenth of July, Monsieur!” replied the King. “Pass on to the third method!”

“The third method, which Stanislaus accepted, was to disguise himself as a peasant, and leave Dantzic, — not with a woman, who might be an embarrassment on the journey, not with a thousand men, who might one and all be slain without finding an exit, but with only two or three reliable men, who were acquainted anywhere. This third method was proposed by Monsieur Monti, the French ambassador, and approved by my kinsman, General Steinflicht.”

“This plan was adopted?”

“Yes, Sire; and if any king, finding himself, or believing himself to be, in the situation of the King of Poland, should graciously deign to accord me the confidence your august ancestor accorded to General Steinflicht, I believe I could answer for him with my head, — above all, if the roads were as free as the roads of France, and the King as good a rider as your Majesty.”

"Certainly!" said the Queen. "But, Monsieur, on the night of the Fifth and Sixth of October the King took his oath never to go away without me, and not even to suggest a plan of departure of which I was not part and parcel. The King's word is pledged, Monsieur, and the King never fails."

"Madame," said Favras, "that makes the journey more difficult, but does not render it impossible; and if I had the honor to conduct such an expedition, I would agree to carry the Queen, King, and whole royal family safe and sound to Montmédy or Brussels, as General Steinflicht led King Stanislaus safe and sound to Marienwerder."

"You hear, Sire!" cried the Queen. "I believe there is nothing to fear, and everything to hope, with a man like Monsieur Favras."

"Yes, Madame," replied the King, "and that is my opinion also; only the hour has not yet struck."

"Very well, Monsieur," said the Queen, "consider what happened to him whose portrait is looking out upon us, the sight of which — at least, so I believed — would give you better counsel. What if you were forced into war? What if the battle were lost? Suppose you were a prisoner! What if a scaffold were erected under your window? Then you, who to-day say *Too early*, will be forced to say, *Too late*."

"In any event, Sire, whatever be the hour, at his first word the King will find me ready," said Favras, bowing. He feared lest his presence should tire the King, as it had already led to a species of conflict between the Queen and Louis the Sixteenth. "I have only my existence to offer my sovereign, and I do not say that I offer that; but I say he always has had, and will have, the right to dispose of my existence, for it belongs to him."

"That is well, Monsieur," said the King, "and if it so falls out, I ratify the promise which the Queen has already made you, in regard to the Marquise and your children."

This time it was a veritable dismissal. The Marquis was obliged to withdraw, however desirous of pressing his ideas, because he saw no encouragement except in the looks of the Queen, who followed him with her eyes till the tapestry closed behind him.

"Ah, Monsieur," said she, extending her hand towards Vandyck's canvas, "when I had that picture brought to your chamber, I believed it would inspire you better."

Superciliously, as if she disdained to pursue the conversation further, she walked towards the door of the alcove; but suddenly stopping she said: "Sire, acknowledge that the Marquis de Favras is not the first person whom you have received this morning."

"No, Madame, you are right. Before the Marquis I received Doctor Gilbert."

The Queen trembled. "Ah," said she, "I suspected as much. And Doctor Gilbert seems to be —?"

"Of my mind, Madame, that we ought not to quit France."

"But being of the opinion that we ought not to leave, he doubtless gave you some counsel which will render our stay here possible?"

"Yes, Madame, he gave us a piece of advice. Unhappily I found it, if not bad, impracticable."

"Indeed! What was his counsel?"

"He wishes us to buy Mirabeau for a year."

"And at what price?" asked the Queen.

"Six millions, and one of your smiles."

The Queen's face at once assumed a deeply meditative character.

"Indeed," she said, "perhaps that may be a means —"

“ Yes, but a means you will refuse, on your part, — is it not so, Madame ? ”

“ I say neither Yes nor No,” said the Queen, with that sinister expression which the Angel of Evil wears in his triumph. “ This is something to be dreamed about ! ” And as she retired she added in a lower voice, “ And I *will* dream about it ! ”

CHAPTER XX.

THE KING BUSIES HIMSELF WITH FAMILY AFFAIRS.

LEFT alone the King stood still for an instant. Then, as if he feared the Queen's retirement was only feigned, he went to the door through which she had passed out, opened it, and peered into the antechambers and corridors.

Perceiving only the attendants, he called, in a low voice : "François!"

An attendant who had risen when the door into the royal apartments opened, and stood waiting for orders, stepped forward, and when the King returned to his rooms, went in behind him.

"François, do you know where are the apartments of the Comte de Charny?"

This attendant was no other than the one engaged by the King after the Twentieth of August, who afterwards left some Memoirs on the close of his Majesty's reign. "Sire," he responded, "the Count has no apartment; he has only an upper room in the Floral Pavilion."

"And why an attic for an officer of his importance?"

"We wished to do better by the Count; but he would not allow it, saying that an attic was good enough for him."

"Well, do you know where his attic is?"

"Yes, Sire."

"Go and inquire for the Count; I wish to speak with him."

The attendant went away, closing the door behind him, and ascended to the mansarde of the Count, whom he found leaning on the bar of his window, his eyes fixed on the ocean of roofs, which loses itself on the horizon, in waves of tiles and slates.

Twice the attendant rapped, but Charny did not hear, so deep was he plunged in meditation. Then the attendant, seeing the key in the door, determined to enter unbidden, since he came at the King's order.

At this noise the Count turned.

"Ah, it is you, Monsieur Hue?" he said. "Do you come for me on the Queen's account?"

"No, Monsieur Count, but on the King's," replied the attendant.

"On the King's?" replied Charny with open and unfeigned surprise.

"Yes, from the King," persisted the attendant.

"It is well, Monsieur Hue! Tell his Majesty that I am at his orders."

The attendant withdrew from the chamber, with the stiffness required by etiquette, while Charny conducted him to the door, with that courtesy which the ancient and genuine nobility showed to any messenger from the King, whether he wore a gold chain about his neck or livery on his back.

Left alone the Count remained a moment with his head pressed between his hands, as if to compel his confused and agitated thoughts to resume their proper place. Order being re-established in his brain, he buckled on his sword, which lay on an armchair, took his hat under his arm, and went downstairs.

He found Louis Sixteenth in the royal chamber, breakfasting, his back turned upon Vandyck's picture.

"Ah, it is you, Count?" he said, raising his head and

perceiving Charny. "Very well, will you breakfast with me?"

"Sire, I am obliged to refuse the honor, having breakfasted already," said the Count, bowing.

"In that case," said Louis, "will you wait awhile; for I have begged you to come to me for a discussion of serious affairs, and I do not like to talk business when I am eating."

"I am at the King's disposal."

"Then instead of talking business, let us discuss something else, — yourself, for example."

"Me, Sire? How do I deserve the notice of my King?"

"When I asked François just now where you were lodged in the Tuileries, do you know what François answered, my dear Count?"

"No, Sire."

"He answered that you had refused a suite of rooms offered you, and would only accept an attic."

"That is true, Sire!"

"Why so, Count?"

"Because, being alone, and having no other importance than that conferred by the kind favor of your Majesties, I did not judge it needful to deprive the Palace Governor of his rooms, when a simple mansarde was all I required."

"Your pardon, my dear Count, but you talk from your standpoint, as if you were a simple officer and bachelor; but you have — and, thank God, in the hour of peril you did not forget it — an important station near ourselves; and moreover you are married. What would the Countess do in your mansarde?"

Charny responded with a melancholy accent, which did not escape the King, — accessible to sentiment as he

always was: "Sire, I do not think that Madame would do me the honor to share my apartment, be it little or great."

"But your Countess, though having an appointment near the Queen, is her friend. The Queen, as you know, cannot get along without Madame de Charny, — although, for some time, I have remarked a coolness between them. When the Countess comes to the palace where will she lodge?"

"Without an express order from your Majesty, I do not think she will ever return to the palace."

"Ah? Bah!"

Charny bowed.

"Impossible!" said the King.

"If your Majesty will pardon me," said Charny, "I feel sure of it in advance."

"Well, that astonishes me less than you might suppose, my dear Count; for, as I just stated, I thought I perceived a coolness between the Queen and her friend."

"And so your Majesty has observed it?"

"Women's quarrels! We must try to arrange all that! Meanwhile, it seems, without knowing it, that I have been conducting myself in a very tyrannical fashion towards you, my dear Count."

"How so, Sire?"

"Why, by forcing you to live at the Tuileries, while the Countess lives — well, where?"

"Rue Coq Héron, Sire."

"I ask from a habit of interrogation, which kings are apt to acquire; but partly from a wish to learn the Countess's whereabouts; although, not knowing Paris as well as if I were a Russian from Moscow or an Austrian from Vienna, I am ignorant whether the Rue Coq Héron is near the Tuileries or far away."

"It is near, Sire."

"So much the better. That explains why you have only a temporary lodging at the Tuileries."

"My chamber at the Tuileries is not merely a temporary lodging," replied Charny, with the same accent of melancholy the King had already noticed in his voice. "On the contrary, it is a permanent lodging, where I may be found at any hour, day or night, when your Majesty does me the honor to send for me."

"Oh, ho, what does that mean, Monsieur?" said the King, turning himself about in his armchair as he finished his breakfast.

"The King will excuse me, but I do not quite understand the question with which he honors me."

"Bah! You do not know that I am a good citizen, eh? — a husband and father before everything else, and that I am almost as anxious about the interior life of my palace as about my kingdom outside? What does it mean, Count, after hardly three years of marriage, that Charny has his regular home at the Tuileries, while Madame has her regular home in the Rue Coq Héron?"

"I can only say to your Majesty, that Madame wishes to live alone."

"But you go there every day? — No? — Well, twice a week —?"

"Sire, I have not had the pleasure of seeing the Countess since the day when the King ordered me to go and tell her some news."

"Why, but that's more than eight days ago!"

"Ten days, Sire," rejoined Charny, in a voice slightly moved.

The King now better understood his sadness and melancholy, and detected in the Count's tone a shade of emotion which he allowed to show itself.

"Count," said Louis, with that good-nature which so well suited a *family man*, as he called himself, "this must be chiefly your fault!"

"My fault?" said Charny vivaciously, and slightly blushing.

"Yes, yes, your fault," insisted the King. "Absence from a wife, and above all from such a perfect woman as your Countess, is always somewhat the fault of the man."

"Sire!"

"You will say this does not concern me, my dear Count; but I reply that it does concern me, that a king can do many things by a single word. Now be frank! You have been irresponsible towards this poor Mademoiselle de Taverney, who loves you so much."

"Who loves me so much? Sire, pardon me; but does your Majesty say that Mademoiselle de Taverney *loves me — so much —*?" replied Charny, with a slight tone of bitterness.

"Mademoiselle de Taverney, or Madame de Charny, — it's all one, I presume!"

"Yes and no, Sire."

"Well, I say that Madame loves you, and I am not deceived."

"Sire, you know it is not allowable to contradict the King."

"Oh, contradict as much as you please! I know what I am talking about."

"And your Majesty has perceived by certain signs, — visible to himself alone, undoubtedly, — that Madame Charny loves me very much?"

"I do not know anything about signs visible to myself alone, my dear Count; but this I know, that on that terrible night of the Sixth October, from the moment

when you joined us, she did not lose sight of you for an instant, and that her eyes expressed all the agony of her heart, — so much so, that when the Bull's Eye Portal was nearly broken in, I saw the poor woman make a movement to throw herself between you and danger."

The Count's heart was beating rapidly. He believed that he had detected in the Countess something similar to what the King alluded to; but each detail of his last interview with Andrée was too distinct in his soul for him not to let these memories overpower the vague affirmation of his heart, and even the more positive affirmation of the King.

"And I also remember," continued the King, "that on the way to Paris, you were sent away by the Queen to the Hôtel de Ville; and the Queen afterwards positively told me that the Countess almost died from grief over your absence, and delight at your return."

"Sire," said Charny, smiling sorrowfully, "God permits those who are born above us to receive at birth, doubtless as a privilege of their race, a faculty of probing heart-secrets, unknown to other men. If the King and Queen have both observed this, it must be so; but the weakness of my sight has made me see otherwise. That is why I pray the King not to disquiet himself about Madame Andrée's great love for me, should he wish to employ me in some mission dangerous or distant. Absence or danger will be equally welcome, on my part at least."

"Yet a week ago, when the Queen wished to send you on a mission to Turin, you apparently desired to remain in Paris."

"I believed my brother equal to the mission, Sire, and reserved myself for one more difficult or more perilous."

"And wisely, my dear Count; because the moment

has come to entrust you with a mission, difficult even now, and perhaps not without danger in the future. This is why I spoke of the isolation of the Countess, and wished to see her nearer some friend when I send away her husband."

"I will write to the Countess, Sire, and impart to her your Majesty's good intentions."

"How? *Write* to her? Do you not expect to *see* the Countess before you go?"

"I never intruded upon my Countess but once without permission, Sire; and after the manner in which she then received me, it will be still more necessary to crave that permission in future, unless I go by your Majesty's express commands."

"Well, well. Let us say no more about it. I will talk to the Queen of all this during your absence," said the King, rising from the table.

Then *ahemming* two or three times, with the satisfaction of a man who has eaten heartily and is sure of his digestion, he observed: "My faith, the doctors are right in saying that everything has two faces, — that sullen face presented to an empty stomach, and that radiant face presented to a full stomach. Enter my cabinet, my dear Count! I feel like talking to you with an open heart."

The Count followed Louis the Sixteenth, wondering at that material and coarse side of his nature which robbed the crowned head of its dignity, and on account of which the proud Marie Antoinette could not restrain herself from reproaching her spouse.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE KING BUSIES HIMSELF WITH STATE AFFAIRS.

ALTHOUGH the King had been nearly a fortnight installed in the Tuileries, only two rooms in his suite had been put in complete order, with none of their necessary furnishings omitted. These two rooms were his workshop and his office.

Later, and on an occasion which had an effect not less injurious than the present upon the destiny of the unhappy Prince, the reader shall be introduced to the Royal Forge; but for the present our business is with the King's study, which we enter after the Count, who stands in front of the desk where the King has seated himself.

This desk was covered with maps, geographical works, English newspapers, and manuscripts, — among which might be distinguished those bearing the chirography of Louis Sixteenth, by the multiplicity of lines, which so covered every sheet as to leave no blanks at the top or bottom, or even on the margin.

His disposition revelled in the smallest details. The parsimony of Louis not only would not allow the waste of the smallest morsel of blank paper, but under his hand these blank pages were very soon covered with as many words as they could possibly contain.

As Charny had been living familiarly with the royal couple for two or three years, he was too well acquainted with all these details to specially notice the points here

chronicled ; therefore his glance did not rest particularly on any one object while waiting for the King to speak.

Despite the confidence expressed beforehand by the King, at this point he seemed a little embarrassed as to how he should open the subject.

To begin with, as if to give himself courage, he opened a drawer in his desk, and in that drawer a secret compartment, whence he took several papers, enclosed in envelops, which he laid on the table, placing his hand upon them.

At last he said : "Monsieur, I have remarked one thing—"

There he paused, scrutinizing Charny closely, as the latter waited respectfully till it should please the King to speak further.

"— That is, that on the night of the Fifth and Sixth of October, having to choose between the guardianship of the Queen or myself, you placed your brother near the Queen, and yourself remained with me."

"Sire, I am the head of my house, as you are the head of the State, and had the personal right to perish near my sovereign."

"That has made me think, that if at any time I had a commission, — secret, difficult, and dangerous, — I could entrust it both to your loyalty as a Frenchman, and to your affection as a friend."

"Oh Sire," said Charny, "however high the King may raise me, I have not the presumption to believe that he would rate me as more than a faithful and devoted subject."

"Count, you are a grave man, though you are hardly thirty-six years old ; and you have not lived through the events which have recently disclosed themselves about us, without drawing some conclusion therefrom. What

do you think of my situation ; and if you were my Prime-Minister, what means of amelioration would you suggest ?”

“Sire,” replied Charny, with more hesitation than embarrassment, “I am a soldier, a sailor. These high social questions are beyond the reach of my intelligence.”

“Monsieur,” said the King, extending his hand to Charny, with a dignity which seemed to grow out of the situation in which he was placed, “you are a man ; and another man, who believes you his friend, asks solely and simply what you would do in his place, — you, with your upright heart and sound mind, as a loyal subject.”

“Sire,” replied Charny, “in a situation not less grave than this, the Queen did me the honor, like the King at this moment, to ask my advice. It was the day when the Bastille was taken. She wished to send eight or ten thousand foreign soldiers against the hundred thousand armed Parisians, winding along over the boulevards and through the streets of the Faubourg Saint Antoine, like a Hydra-headed serpent of iron and steel. If I had been less known to the Queen, if she had seen less of the devotion and respect in my heart, my answer would no doubt have made her angry with me. Alas, Sire, must I not fear to-day, when interrogated by the King, lest my unduly frank response should wound the King ?”

“What did you say to the Queen, Monsieur ?”

“That your Majesty must enter Paris as a father, if not strong enough to enter as a conqueror.”

“Well, was not that the advice which I adopted ?”

“It was indeed, Sire.”

“Now then, it remains to be seen if I did well to follow it ; for — answer me yourself ! — am I here as King or as prisoner ?”

“Will the King permit me to speak with all freedom ?”

"Do so, Monsieur. When I ask your advice, I ask at the same time your judgment."

"Sire, I disapproved the festival at Versailles. I begged the Queen not to go to the theatre in your absence. Sire, when the Queen trod the national cockade under her feet, in order to display the black cockade, — the Austrian symbol, — I was in despair."

"Charny, do you believe that therein lay the real cause of the events of the Fifth and Sixth of October?"

"No, Sire; but this certainly furnished a pretext. Sire, you are not unjust towards the people, I trust? The people are good; they love you, they are Royalists; but the people suffer, — they are cold and hungry. There are bad advisers, above them, below them, and on all sides of them, who push the people forward. The people march, they crowd, they upset things, but they know not their own force. Once set them loose, belched forth in full motion, and there follows an inundation or a conflagration; they burn and they engulf."

"But suppose, Count, as is very natural, that I prefer to be neither drowned nor burned, then what ought I to do?"

"Sire, on no account give any pretext for the flood to spread itself, or for the fire to be kindled. But pardon me," added Charny, pausing, "I forgot that even under the King's order —"

"You are speaking at my request! Continue, Monsieur de Charny, the King prays you to continue."

"Well, Sire, you have seen the Parisian people, so long bereaved of their sovereigns, rejoice like starving men over your return. You saw them at Versailles, threatening, burning, assassinating, — or rather you thought you saw them, for at Versailles it was not the people! As yourself, the Queen, and the royal family

stood on the double balcony here at the Tuileries, you heard the people saluting. They have even penetrated into your apartments, by means of deputations, — a deputation of Dames of the Market-place, a deputation of the Civil Guard, deputations of the municipal corporations, — of those who had not even the honor of being appointed deputies. They came into your rooms, to exchange words with you. You saw how they pressed up to the windows of your dining-room, — how the mothers wafted to the illustrious eaters — sweet offering! — the kisses of their children.”

“Yes,” said the King, “I saw all that, and thence arises my hesitation. I ask myself, who are the real people, those who kill and burn, or those who caress and welcome?”

“Oh, the last, Sire, the last! Confide in them, and they will defend you against the others.”

“Count, you repeat to me, after two hours’ interval, exactly what Doctor Gilbert told me this forenoon.”

“Having received advice from a man so wise, so profound, so sensible as the Doctor, why do you deign to ask advice from me, a poor officer?”

“I’ll tell you, Monsieur,” responded Louis. “It is because there is this great difference between you two. You are devoted to your King, but Doctor Gilbert is devoted only to the Kingdom.”

“I do not understand, Sire.”

“I mean that he would willingly abandon the King, — that is, the man, — if the Kingdom — that is, the principle — were safe.”

“Then your Majesty speaks truly. There *is* this difference between us, — that you are to me both King and Kingdom. It is with this understanding that I beg you to employ me.”

"Above all, I wish to learn from you, Monsieur, to whom you would appeal, in this moment of calm, — when we are perhaps between two storms, — to dissipate the traces of the gale which is past, and conjure away the hurricane about to burst upon us."

"If I had the honor and the misfortune to be King, I should recall the cries which surrounded the royal carriage on the return from Versailles, and I should offer my right hand to Lafayette and my left to Mirabeau."

"Count, how can you say this to me," said the King, briskly, "when you detest the one and despise the other?"

"Sire, this is not a question of my likes and dislikes, but of the welfare of the King and the future of the Kingdom."

"Just what Doctor Gilbert said," muttered the King, as if talking to himself.

"I am glad," said Charny, "to agree in opinion with a man so eminent as Doctor Gilbert."

"So you think, Count, that the union of these two men would restore peace to the nation and security to the King?"

"With the help of God, I should hope everything from the union of these two men."

"But after all, if I lend myself to this union, and consent to this compact, what if I fail, in spite of my desires, perhaps in spite of these two men? What do you think ought to be done, if this ministerial combination should come to naught?"

"Then, having used all the means placed in your hands by Providence, having fulfilled the duties laid upon you by your position, I believe it would be right for the King to consider the safety of himself and family."

"You would then advise me to run away?"

"I should then counsel your Majesty to retire to some well-fortified place, like Metz, Nancy, or Strasburg, with such regiments and gentlemen as you think you can rely upon."

The King's face beamed. "Ah," he said, "among all the generals who have given me proofs of their devotion, let us see,—speak freely, Charny, you who are acquainted with them all,—whom would you entrust with the dangerous task of relieving or receiving his King?"

"Oh Sire, Sire, it is a grave responsibility to guide the King in such a choice. Sire, I know my own ignorance, my own feebleness, my impotence. Sire, I beg you to hold me excused!"

"Well, I will put you at your ease, Monsieur," said the King. "My choice is made. It falls upon a man to whom I wish to send you. Here is the letter, all prepared, which you are commissioned to deliver to him. A name which you mentioned was not without its influence on my determination. He will designate another faithful servitor, who will undoubtedly, in his turn, have occasion to show his fidelity. Let us see, Charny, if you had to intrust your King to the courage, the loyalty, the intelligence of one man, what man would you choose?"

After reflecting an instant Charny replied: "I swear to your Majesty that it is not because ties of friendship, almost of family, bind me to him; but there is one man in the army, noted for his great devotion to the King,—a man who, during the American war, as governor of our islands, efficiently protected our possessions in the Antilles, and even snatched several islands from the English. He has since been intrusted with divers im-

portant commands, and is now, I believe, Governor-General of the City of Metz. This man is the Marquis de Bouillé. As a father, I would confide to him my son ; as a son, I would confide to him my father ; as a subject, I would confide to him my King."

Though Louis Sixteenth was undemonstrative he followed the Count's words with evident anxiety, and his face lighted up as he gradually recognized the person whom Charny referred to. When the Count at last pronounced the name the King could not repress a cry of joy.

"Stop, stop," he said. "Read the address on this letter, and see if I was not inspired to summon you by Providence itself."

Charny took the letter from the hands of the King, and read the superscription :

*To M. François Claude Amour,
Marquis de Bouillé,
Commanding General in the
City of Metz.*

Tears of joy and pride rose to Charny's eyelids. "Sire," he cried, "after such a coincidence I can only say one thing, — that I am ready to die for your Majesty."

"And after what has passed I do not think it right for me to have any secrets from you. In the time to come it is to you — and to you alone, you will understand — that I confide my own person and that of the Queen and my children. Listen to me. Hear what has been proposed to me, and I have refused."

Charny bowed, giving all his attention to what the King was about to say.

"This is not the first time, as you may well believe, Monsieur, that the idea has occurred to me, or has come to me from those around me, to carry out a project analogous to the one we are considering at this moment. During the night of the Fifth and Sixth of October I thought of having the Queen escape. A carriage was to take her to Rambouillet. I was to meet her there on horseback ; and thence we could easily have gained the frontier, inasmuch as the espionage which surrounds us now was not yet so close. The project failed, because the Queen would not part from me, and made me swear never to part from her."

"I was present, Sire, when this pious oath was exchanged between King and Queen, or rather between husband and wife."

"Since then Monsieur de Breteuil has opened negotiations with me, through the mediation of the Comte d'Innisdal, and a week ago I received a letter from Soleure."

The King paused, seeing that the Count remained mute and immovable. "You do not respond," he said.

"Sire," replied Charny, bowing, "I know that Breteuil is under Austrian influence, and I fear lest I should disturb the natural sympathy of the King with the Queen his wife, and with his brother-in-law, the Emperor of Austria, Joseph the Second."

The King seized Charny's hand, and leaning towards him said, in a low tone : "Fear nothing, Count, for I love Austria no better than you do."

Charny's hand trembled with surprise between the King's hands.

"Count, Count, when a man of your valor is to give himself — that is, to make the sacrifice of his life — for another man, who has only the sorrowful advantage over

him of being King, it is but fair that the hero should have some knowledge of him to whom he devotes himself. Count, I have already said, and I repeat it, — I do not love Austria. I do not love Maria Theresa, who kept us seven years in a war wherein we lost two hundred thousand men, two hundred millions of money, and seventeen hundred leagues of territory in America, — who called Madame Pompadour (a harlot) her cousin, and who had my father (a saint) poisoned by Choiseul, — who used her daughters as diplomatic agents, governing Naples through the Archduchess Caroline, as, through the Archduchess Marie Antoinette, she wanted to govern France.”

“Sire, Sire, you forget that I am an outsider, a simple subject of the King and *Queen* of France!” said Charny, underlining the word *Queen* with his voice, as we have underlined it with the pen.

“I have already told you,” replied the King, “that you are a friend; and I may talk to you the more frankly, because the prejudice which I hitherto entertained towards the Queen has been completely effaced from my mind. Against my judgment I took a wife who was doubly the enemy of France, because she is of the house of Lorraine as well as the house of Austria. Against my will I allowed at Court the Abbé Vermond, professedly the preceptor of my wife (then the Dauphiness) but really a spy of Maria Theresa’s, and one whom I elbowed twice or thrice a day, as if he had been commissioned to thrust himself between my elbows, and to whom I did not speak a word for nineteen years. It was against my will, after ten years of struggle, that I intrusted Breteuil with a department of my household and in the government of Paris. I took the Archbishop of Toulouse, an atheist, for my Prime-Minister; but this also was against my inclination. Finally, in spite of myself, I paid Austria the mil-

lions she wished to extort from Holland. To-day, at this very hour, while I am speaking, although Maria Theresa is dead, who counsels and directs the Queen? Her brother, Joseph Second, is happily near his death. By whom is she counselled? You know, as well as I, — by the agency of that same Abbé Vermond, the Baron de Breteuil, and Mercy d'Argenteau, the Austrian ambassador. Behind one old man is hidden another old man, Kaunitz, the Septuagenarian, and minister of centenarian Austria. These two old fools, or rather these two old dowagers, influence the Queen of France, through her milliner, Mademoiselle Bertin, and through her hairdresser, Leonard, to whom they give pensions. And whither would they lead her? Into an alliance with Austria, — Austria, always the bane of France, whether as friend or as foe, — Austria, who put the dagger into the hands of Jacques Clement, a poniard into the hands of Ravailiac, a penknife into the hands of Damiens, — Austria, formerly devout and Catholic, but to-day abjuring her faith, and half adopting the infidel philosophy of Joseph Second, — imprudent Austria, who turns against herself her own sword, Hungary, — improvident Austria, who allows the brightest jewel of her crown, the Low Countries, to be stolen by Belgian priests, — Austria, the vassal, who turns her back on Europe, of which she never ought to lose sight, and uses against the Turks, our allies, her best troops, all for the benefit of Russia. No, no, no, Monsieur de Charny, I hate Austria; yes, I hate her, and will not trust her."

"Sire, Sire, such confidences are honorable, but at the same time dangerous to him who makes them. Sire, if some day you should repent telling me —"

"Oh, I have no fear of that, and the proof is that I will finish my statements."

"If your Majesty commands me to listen, why, I will listen."

"This overture is not the only one made to me about flight. Do you know the Marquis de Favras?"

"The former captain in the regiment of Belzunce, and once lieutenant in the Guards of *Monsieur*" (as the King's brother, Provence, was commonly called). "Yes, Sire."

"The same," said the King, dwelling on the last qualification, "*once lieutenant in the Guards of Monsieur!* What think you of him?"

"That he is a brave soldier, a loyal gentleman, ruined by misfortune, which makes him restless, and drives him into a host of hazardous experiments and brainless projects; but a man of honor, who would die without recoiling a step, without uttering a complaint, if he had given his word. He is a man whom your Majesty might reasonably trust for a bold, swift action, but one who, I fear, would not do so well as the chief of an enterprise."

"But the chief of the enterprise is not he," replied the King with some bitterness, "it is *Monsieur*, my brother of Provence, who finds the money, — *Monsieur*, who prepares everything. It is Provence who, devoted to this end, will remain here when I go away with Favras."

Charny made a gesture.

"Well, what is it, Count?" pursued the King. "This is not an Austrian scheme, but a scheme of the Princes, of the nobility, of French fugitives."

"Excuse me, Sire! As I told you, I doubt neither the loyalty nor courage of Favras. Whithersoever he promises to conduct your Majesty, he will do it, or die in your defence on the road; but why should *Monsieur* not go with your Majesty? Why should he remain here?"

"Out of devotion, I tell you ; and perhaps also, in case it should be advisable to depose the King, and nominate a regent, that the people, weary of running in vain after their King, may not have too far to go to *find* their regent."

"Sire," cried Charny, "your Majesty alludes to terrible things."

"I tell you what all the world knows, my dear Count, what your brother wrote me yesterday, — that in the last Council of the Princes, at Turin, the question of my deposition and a regency was discussed ; and that in the same Council my cousin of Condé proposed to march on Lyons. You see, therefore, that even in my extremity I cannot rely upon either Favras or Breteuil, Austria or the Princes. This, my dear Count, I have said to nobody except yourself ; and when I assure you that no other person, *not even the Queen*," — perhaps it was not by design, but by accident, that he emphasized these words, *not even the Queen*, — "has reposed such trust in you as I do now, it follows that you should be devoted to no one else as you are to me."

"Sire," asked Charny, bowing, "ought the secret of my journey to be guarded from all the world?"

"It matters little, my dear Count, who knows that you go, if your errand is not known."

"And the purpose should be revealed to Bouillé alone?"

"To him alone, and only when you are sure of his sentiments. The letter which I send him by you is a simple letter of introduction. You know my position, my fears, my hopes, better than my wife, better than Necker my minister, better than Gilbert my counsellor. Act correspondingly ! I put the thread and scissors into your hands. Unwind the thread, or cut it."

Then presenting the open letter he added : " Read it ! " Charny took the letter and read :

PALACE OF THE TUILERIES, 29 October.

MONSIEUR : I hope that you continue to be contented with your situation as Governor of Metz. The Comte de Charny, a lieutenant of my Guards, who is to pass through your city, will ask if it is your wish that I should do anything further for you. If so, I shall seize the opportunity to oblige you, as I seize this opportunity to renew the assurance of all my sentiments of esteem.

LOUIS.

" Go then, Monsieur ; and you have full power as to the promises to be made to the Governor, if you think there is any need of promises ; only do not pledge me beyond my ability ; " and he offered his hand a second time.

Charny kissed that hand with a devotion which rendered new protestations needless, and then went out of the cabinet, leaving the King convinced — and rightly so — that he had won the Count's heart better by this confidence, than he had been able to do by all the riches and favor he had bestowed upon Charny in the days of the utmost royal prosperity.

CHAPTER XXII.

WITH THE QUEEN.

WITH a heart full of contradictory sentiments Charny left the King; but the first of these sentiments, which came to the surface of the thought-waves surging tumultuously in his brain, was the deep gratitude he felt for the boundless confidence which the King had bestowed upon him.

This confidence indeed imposed upon him duties the more sacred, because his conscience was far from quiet, in view of his former indignity towards this worthy King, who, in the hour of danger, placed his hand upon Charny's shoulder, as upon that of a faithful and loyal supporter.

The more deeply Charny recalled his injuries towards his master, the more ready was he to devote himself to that master now. The more this sentiment of respectful devotion increased in the Count's heart, the more the impure sentiment decreased, which for days, months, and years he had vowed to the Queen.

He had been detained in Court by a vague hope, born in the midst of dangers, — like flowers which bloom on precipices and perfume ravines, — a hope which led him near André. This hope being lost, Charny earnestly accepted a mission which would take him far from Court, where he experienced the double torment of being loved by a woman whose affection he could no longer return, and of not being loved — at least, as he believed — by the wife whom he had at last learned to love.

Profiting by the coolness which for several days had affected his relations with the Queen, he returned to his chamber, determined to announce his departure by a simple letter, when he found Weber waiting at the door. The Queen wished to speak with him, and desired his immediate attendance. There was no way of resisting the Queen's desire, for the wishes of crowned heads are commands.

Charny gave orders to his valet that horses should be put to his carriage, and then followed in the steps of the Queen's foster-brother.

Marie Antoinette was in a state of mind wholly opposed to Charny's. She recalled her harshness towards the Count, and the devotion he had shown her at Versailles. She felt something like remorse at the remembrance — for the sight was ever present to her mind's eye — of Charny's brother, as he lay bleeding in the corridor which led to her chamber ; and she acknowledged to herself that even if the Count had shown her nothing but dutiful devotion, she had poorly recompensed that devotion ; but had she not the right to demand of him something more than devotion ? Yet, on reflection, was Charny guilty of any of the offences against her which she imagined ?

Must she not attribute to fraternal grief, the indifference which he allowed her to see since her return from Versailles ? Besides, this indifference existed only on the surface perhaps, and her restless love had been over hasty in condemning Charny for refusing the mission to Turin, which she had offered him in the hope of taking him away from Andrée. Her first idea, jealous and malicious, had been that this refusal was caused by the growing love of the Count for Andrée, and his desire to remain near his wife ; and in fact, when the latter left

one night at seven o'clock, she was followed two hours later, by her husband, into her retreat in the Rue Coq Heron ; but Charny's absence had not been long. When nine o'clock sounded he returned to the palace. Moreover, in returning to the palace, he declined the suite of three rooms which had been prepared for him by the King's order, and contented himself with one of the mansardes intended for the domestics.

It had seemed to the poor Queen that this combination of events was one in which her self-respect and her passion must both suffer ; but the closest inquiry had never succeeded in finding Charny outside the palace, except when engaged in his official duties ; and it was abundantly evident to the eyes of the Queen, as to the eyes of the other denizens of the palace, that since his return to Paris, and their entrance into the Tuileries, Charny had hardly quitted his chamber.

It was equally evident, on the other side, that Andrée had not reappeared in the palace since the night she left it. If Andrée and Charny had seen each other it was for an hour only, on the day when the Count declined the mission to Turin.

It is true that during this period he had not tried to see the Queen ; but instead of detecting in this absence a mark of indifference, ought not her clear sight to find therein, on the contrary, a proof of his passion ? Wounded by the Queen's unjust suspicions, had he not remained apart, not from excess of indifference, but from excess of love ?

The Queen acknowledged to herself that she was unjust, — unjust for reproaching Charny, on that terrible night of the Fifth and Sixth of October, because he remained with the King rather than the Queen, and had one look for Andrée between every two looks for herself. She had

been hard in not sharing, with a heart more tender, the deep sorrow which had moved Charny at the sight of his dead brother.

It is thus with all deep and true love. In the presence of the complaining one, the beloved object seems full of asperities. At a short distance all these reproaches seem well-founded. Defects of character, oddities of mind, forgetfulness of heart, all appear under a magnifying glass, and it is hard for one to understand how these defects have been so long unnoticed and endured. But if the object of this fatal investigation withdraws from sight, either voluntarily or by force, these asperities disappear, which had before wounded us like thorns. The disagreeable outlines are effaced. A too vigorous realism vanishes before the poetic breath of distance and the caressing touch of memory. We no longer judge; we compare. We condemn ourselves with a rigor measured by the indulgence felt for the other, who we see has been ill appreciated; and the result of this heart-travail is, that after an absence of eight or ten days, the absentee seems more dear and indispensable than ever.

It is to be understood that we are not supposing a case where another passion profits by this absence to take the place of the first.

Such were the feelings of the Queen towards Charny, when the door opened, and the Count, who had, as we know, just left the King's study, appeared, in the irreproachable garb of an officer on duty; but there was, at the same time, in his demeanor, though always profoundly respectful, something icy, which seemed to chill the magnetic outflow, ready to gush from the Queen's heart, on its search into Charny's heart, for all the mutual remembrances, pleasant, tender, or doleful, which they had experienced during the four years past.

Charny bowed and remained on the threshold. The Queen glanced about her, as if asking what caused the young man to remain at the end of the apartment. Being assured that Charny's free-will was the only cause of his standing thus aloof, she said: "Approach, Monsieur de Charny, we are alone."

Charny drew near, and said, with a mild but firm voice, in which it was impossible to detect the least emotion: "I am here at the orders of your Majesty."

"Count," replied the Queen, in her most sentimental tones, "did you not hear me say that we were alone?"

"Yes, Madame, but I do not see how solitude can change the mode in which a subject should bear himself towards his sovereign."

"When I sent for you, Count, and learned from Weber that you were following him, I supposed one friend was coming to converse with another friend."

A bitter smile outlined itself lightly on Charny's lips.

"Yes, Count," said the Queen, "I understand that smile, and I know what you are saying to yourself inside. You think I was unjust to you at Versailles, and that in Paris I have been capricious."

"Injustice and caprice are allowable in any woman, Madame, — and, by higher right, in a Queen."

"Heavens, my friend," said Marie Antoinette, with all the charm she could infuse into her eyes and voice, "you know one thing, — that is, whether caprice comes to the Queen or the woman, the Queen cannot get along without a counsellor, nor the woman without a friend."

She tendered him her white tapering hand, a little wasted, but still worthy to serve as a sculptor's model. Charny took this royal hand, and after kissing it respectfully, was ready to let it drop, when he felt that she wished to retain his own.

"Well," said the poor woman, replying in words to a movement which he made, "well, yes, I have been unjust, — more than unjust, — cruel. You have lost a dear brother in my service, Count, a brother whom you loved with an affection almost paternal. That brother died for me. I ought to weep with you. In that moment terror, love, jealousy, — whatever you will, Charny ! I am a woman ! — stayed the tears in my eyes ; but left alone, during the ten days since I last saw you, I have paid you my debt of tears ; and the proof of it is, my friend, that I still weep."

Marie Antoinette threw her head slightly backward, so that Charny might see two tears, limpid as two diamonds, roll down the furrows which sorrow had begun to trace in her cheeks.

Ah, if Charny could have known what a quantity of tears would follow the two before him, without doubt he would have fallen at the feet of the Queen, moved by an immense pity for her, and demanded pardon for all the wrongs he had done her ; but, by permission of a merciful God, the future is covered with a veil which no hand may lift, which no look may pierce, before its proper hour ; and the black tapestry which concealed the destiny of Marie Antoinette seemed enriched with golden embroidery, in order that no one should perceive it to be funereal drapery.

As it was, too little time had elapsed since Charny kissed the hand of the King, to allow the kiss he placed on the Queen's hand to be other than a simple mark of respect.

"Believe me, Madame," said he, "that I am not ungrateful for this remembrance of me, for this grief on account of my brother ; but unfortunately I have barely time to express my acknowledgments."

"How so? What do you say?" she asked, in the utmost astonishment.

"I wish to say that I leave Paris in an hour."

"Leave Paris in an hour?"

"Yes, Madame!"

"My God! You abandon us, like all the rest," cried the Queen. "Will you flee your country, Monsieur?"

"Alas! Your Majesty would prove to me, through that cruel question, that I have been guilty of some wrong in my ignorance —"

"Pardon, my friend, but you said you were going away. Why do you go?"

"To accomplish a mission with which the King has done me the honor to charge me."

"And you quit Paris?" asked she, anxiously.

"I quit Paris, — yes, Madame!"

"For some time?"

"I do not know."

"But a week ago it seems to me that you refused a mission abroad?"

"That is true, Madame."

"Why then, having refused that mission only eight days ago, do you accept another to-day?"

"Because in eight days many changes may come over a man's life, and consequently over his resolutions."

The Queen appeared to make an effort to control her will, and the different organs subordinate to that will-power, and charged with obedience thereto.

"And you go — alone?" she asked presently.

"Yes, Madame, alone."

Marie Antoinette breathed again. Then she drooped an instant, as if overwhelmed by the effort she had made, and asked, wiping her brow with her cambric handkerchief: "Where do you go?"

Charny replied respectfully: "I know the King has no secrets from your Majesty; and that if the Queen will ask her royal spouse the point of my destination, and the object of my mission, he will undoubtedly inform her."

Marie Antoinette reopened her eyes, and looked at him with amazement.

"But why should I address myself to him, when I can ask you?"

"Because the secret I bear is the King's, not mine."

"It appears to me," she replied with some haughtiness, "that if the secret belongs to the King, it belongs also to the Queen."

"I do not doubt it, Madame," responded Charny, bowing. "That is why I venture to assure your Majesty that the King will not hesitate about informing you."

"But is this mission somewhere in France, or is it to a foreign land?"

"The King alone can furnish her Majesty with the enlightenment she seeks."

"Then," said the Queen, with a deep expression of disappointment, which revealed the irritation caused by Charny's reticence, "as you go away, far from me, you will undoubtedly run into some perils; and yet I shall not know where you are, nor what dangers you incur."

"I can swear to you, as a faithful subject with a devoted heart, that wherever I may be, your Majesty will be there also; and all dangers which I may encounter will be dear to me, because I expose myself in the service of two heads which I venerate above all the world."

Bowing again, the Count evidently awaited the Queen's signal to retire.

She breathed a sigh which resembled a suppressed sob, and pressed her throat with her hand, as if to choke back the tears. "It is well, Monsieur!" was all she said.

Charny bowed anew, and walked towards the door with a firm step ; but at the moment when his hand touched the knob, she extended her arms towards him and called his name.

He trembled, and turned around with a pale face.

"Charny, come here !" she continued.

He approached unsteadily.

"Come nearer," added the Queen. "Look me in the face ! You no longer love me ! Am I not right ? You cannot deny it !"

Charny felt a shiver course through his veins. For an instant he believed he should faint. It was the first time this haughty woman, this sovereign, had really humbled herself before him.

Under other circumstances, at any other time, he would have fallen on his knees before her, and craved her pardon ; but he was now sustained by the remembrance of what had passed between the King and himself, and, rallying all his strength, thus replied : "Madame, after the marks of confidence and good-will wherewith the King has honored me, I should indeed be a wretch if I exhibited towards your Majesty, at such a time, anything but devotion and respect."

"You are right, Count, and you are free to go."

For an instant Charny was seized with an irresistible desire to throw himself at the feet of the Queen ; but the invincible loyalty which burned within him covered, if it did not smother, the embers of that passion which he had believed extinguished, but which had been on the point of rekindling itself more fiercely and brightly than ever.

He hastened from the room, with one hand on his forehead and the other on his breast, murmuring disconnected words ; but incoherent as they were, if Marie Antoinette

had overheard those words, they would have changed her despairing tears into a smile of triumph.

She followed him with her eyes, hoping that he would turn and come back to her ; but she saw the door open before him and shut behind him, and heard his steps as he passed through the antechambers and corridors. She continued to look and listen, five minutes after the sound of his footsteps had ceased.

Suddenly her attention was attracted by a new noise, which came from the courtyard. It was the noise of a vehicle.

She ran to the window, and recognized Charny's traveling-carriage, which crossed the Courtyard of the Swiss Guards, and passed out into the Rue Carrousel.

She rang for Weber. Weber entered.

"If I were not a prisoner in the palace," she said, "and wished to go to the Rue Coq Heron, what street would it be necessary to take ?"

"It would be necessary, Madame, to go out by the door into the Swiss Courtyard, turn into the Rue Carrousel, then follow the Rue Saint Honoré as far as —"

"Enough, that will do. — He has gone to bid *her* adieu !" she murmured to herself.

After leaning her forehead a moment on the cool glass she continued in a low voice, bruising each word between her clenched teeth : "Better that I should know what is coming to me."

Then she said aloud : "Weber, go to Rue Coq Heron, number nine, and tell Madame Charny that I desire to talk with her this evening."

"Pardon, Madame, but I believe your Majesty has already disposed of this evening in favor of Doctor Gilbert ?"

"True," said she, hesitatingly.

“What does your Majesty wish?”

“Countermand the order to Doctor Gilbert, and give him an appointment for to-morrow forenoon.”

Then she added in a lower tone: “Yes, that will do. To-morrow, politics. At any rate the conversation I shall have with the Countess will have no influence over the determination I have taken;” and she dismissed Weber with a sign of her hand.

CHAPTER XXIII.

SOMBRE OUTLOOKS.

THE Queen was mistaken. Charny did not go near his Countess. He went to the Royal Post to get posthorses for his carriage.

While they were being harnessed, however, he went into the office of the superintendent, asked for quill, ink, and paper, and wrote a letter to the Countess, which he sent by the servant who took the Count's own horses back to their stables.

The Countess, half reclining on a sofa in a corner of the parlor, with a small table near her, was reading this letter, when Weber was ushered in, without previous announcement, in accordance with the privilege of messengers who came from the King or Queen.

"Monsieur Weber!" said the chambermaid, opening the door. At the same instant Weber appeared.

The Countess quickly folded the letter which she held in her hand, and placed it in her bosom, as if perchance the Queen's attendant had come to rend it from her.

Weber discharged his errand in German. It was always a pleasure for the good fellow to speak the language of his own country, and Andrée, who had learned it in her youth, had come to speak German like her maternal tongue, during her ten years of familiarity with it in the Queen's service.

One cause which made Weber regret the departure of Andrée, and her alienation from the Queen, was that this worthy man thereby lost many an occasion for speaking his native tongue.

Undoubtedly with the hope that an interview would end in reconciliation, he earnestly insisted that Andrée should on no account fail to meet the appointment, recurring several times to the fact that the Queen had countermanded an interview appointed for Doctor Gilbert, the same evening, so that she might be mistress of the hour.

Andrée responded simply that she was at the orders of her Majesty.

After Weber's departure the Countess remained quiet with closed eyes for an instant, like one who would banish from her spirit every outside thought that occupies it; and only when she felt that she was fully herself again, did she take out the letter and resume its perusal.

The reading finished, she kissed the letter tenderly, and laid it on her heart. Then, with a smile full of sorrow, she said: "God keep you, dear soul of my life. I know not where you are, but God knows, and my prayers know where God is to be found."

Then she patiently and fearlessly awaited the hour when she was to report herself at the Tuileries, although she found it impossible to conjecture why the Queen had summoned her.

Not so with the Queen. In a certain way she was a prisoner in the palace, but she wandered about the Floral Pavilion and the Marsan Pavilion, to subdue her impatience.

Monsieur helped her to pass an hour, for Provence had come to the Tuileries to ascertain how Favras had been received by the King.

Ignorant of the purpose of Charny's journey, and wishing to keep open the way of safety proposed by Favras, the Queen agreed to more in behalf of the King than he had pledged for himself.

She told *Monsieur* that he must persevere, and that at the proper time she would be responsible for everything.

On his side, *Monsieur* was joyous and full of confidence. The loan which he had successfully negotiated, through Favras, with the Genoese banker, whom we saw for an instant in his country-house at Bellevue, placed two millions in *Monsieur's* hands, of which he could persuade Favras to accept only two hundred louis, which were absolutely needed, in order to pacify two sharp fellows, on whom he had sworn that he could depend, and who were to second him in the royal abduction.

Favras wanted to give *Monsieur* information about these two fellows; but Provence, always prudent, not only refused to see them, but even to learn their names.

Monsieur was to be ignorant of all that happened. He supplied Favras with money, because Favras had formerly been attached to the suite of his Highness; but what Favras did with this money, *Monsieur* neither knew nor wished to know.

In case the King should go away, as we have already stated, *Monsieur* would remain.

He had the appearance of being entirely outside of the plot. *Monsieur* cried out against the flight of his brothers and cousins, because he found this a method of making himself more popular; and as loyalty to their sovereigns was deeply rooted in the hearts of the great majority of the French people, it was probable, as Louis the Sixteenth had told Charny, that *Monsieur* would be chosen Regent, if the King took flight.

In case the removal was a failure, *Monsieur* would know nothing about it. He would deny everything. Perhaps, with the fifteen or eighteen hundred thousand francs which remained to his account, he would flee as far as Turin, and rejoin his brother Artois and the Princes Condé.

After Provence's departure the Queen consumed another hour with the Princess Lamballe. This poor lady, devoted to the Queen even unto death, — and the occasion was eventually found for this devotion, — had never been more than a convenience for Marie Antoinette, who had transferred her inconstant favor successively to Andrée and the Polignac ladies; but the Queen knew her, — knew that it was only needful to take a single step towards this true friend, to have that friend come all the rest of the way to meet her, with open heart and arms.

At the Tuileries, since the return from Versailles, the Princess Lamballe had occupied the Floral Pavilion, where she held receptions for Marie Antoinette, as Madame Polignac had done at the Trianon. Whenever the Queen was in great sorrow or anxiety, it was to Madame Lamballe she went, — a proof that there she felt herself truly beloved. Without saying a word, without even making this amiable young woman the confidant of her grief or her worry, the Queen would lay her head on the shoulder of this living statue of Friendship, and the tears which poured from the royal eyes, mingled with their companions from the eyes of the Princess.

Poor martyr! Who dare search the gloom of the historic alcoves to learn whether the source of thy friendship was pure or criminal, when History, inexorable and terrible, comes with her feet in thy blood, to tell what a price that friendship cost thee!

Then dinner occupied another hour. That day they dined *en famille*, with Madame Elizabeth, the Princess Lamballe, and the children.

During the dinner the two most illustrious eaters were preoccupied. Each kept a secret from the other : the Queen, the affair with Favras ; the King, his affair with Bouillé.

Unlike the King, who would have preferred owing his safety to anything, even to the Revolution, rather than to strangers, the Queen liked foreigners best ; but it should be recollected that those whom Frenchmen called foreigners, really belonged to the Queen's own family. How could she place the people who killed her soldiers, the women who insulted her in the courtyards at Versailles, the men who tried to assassinate her in her apartments, the crowd who taunted her as *that Austrian woman*, — how could she weigh them in the same scales with the kings of whom she demanded succor, with her brother Joseph the Second, with her brother-in-law Ferdinand the First, with her cousin Charles the Fourth ?

The Queen therefore could not see any crime in the proposed flight, though it was afterwards so denominated. She saw in it only a means of maintaining the royal dignity ; and when they should return, with an armed hand, she hoped for a full expiation of all the insults received.

We have seen the inmost heart of Louis, so distrustful of kings and princes. He did not belong in the least to the Queen's party, as has been so generally believed, although he was German on his mother's side ; for the Germans hardly regard the Austrians as being really Germans.

No, the King belonged to the priests. He ratified all decrees against kings, against princes, against fugitives ;

but he would set his veto to any decree against the priests. For them he risked the Twentieth of June, endured the Tenth of August, submitted to the Twenty-first of January ; and so the Pope, who could not make Louis Sixteenth a Saint, did declare him a Martyr.

Contrary to her custom the Queen to-day remained only a little while with her children. She felt somewhat as if she had no right to their caresses at that moment, her heart not being entirely their father's.

The heart of woman alone fathoms its own strange contradictions, for it is a mysterious labyrinth, hiding passion and breeding repentance.

At an early hour the Queen retired to her apartments, and shut herself in. She said she wished to write, and placed Weber on guard at the door.

The King scarcely noticed her withdrawal, preoccupied, as he was, with events — less important it is true, but still very grave — which menaced the peace of the city, whereof the Lieutenant of Police had come to inform him.

In two words these were the events.

The Assembly, as we know, had declared itself inseparable from the King ; and the King being in Paris, the Assembly followed him there. While waiting for the Riding School to be made ready, — the place intended for them, — the members selected for their sessions a hall in the Archbishop's Palace.

There they voted to exchange the title, King of France and Navarre, for the title, King of the French.

They also prescribed the following royal formula, "Louis, King by the Grace of God and by the Constitutional Law of the State," to be used instead of the old formula, "We, by our sovereign knowledge and full power."

This proves that the National Assembly, like all other parliamentary assemblies, of which this was either the offspring or the progenitor, busied itself too much with things futile, when it should have been paying attention to matters more serious.

For instance, it should have considered that Paris needed to be fed, for Paris was perishing with hunger.

The return from Versailles, and the installation of the Baker, the Bakeress, and the Baker's Boy in the Tuileries, had not brought about the expected relief. Flour and bread continued very scarce. Every day there were crowds at the bakery doors, and these crowds led to great disorders.

How could they be remedied, since the privilege of public meetings was guaranteed by the Declaration of Human Rights?

Of all this the Assembly practically knew nothing. Its members were not compelled to stand in the long line of bread-buyers at the bakeries; and if perchance one of the members was hungry during the session, he was always sure of finding small fresh rolls a hundred steps off, at the shop of a baker named François, who lived in the Rue Marché Palu, in the neighborhood of Notre Dame Cathedral, and who, baking six or eight batches of bread a day, always kept a reserve for Gentlemen of the Assembly.

The Lieutenant of Police was engaged in making the King aware of his anxiety about these disorders, which might develop into an outbreak some fine morning, when Weber opened the door of the Queen's little cabinet, and announced, in a low voice: "Madame la Comtesse de Charny."

CHAPTER XXIV.

WIFE WITHOUT HUSBAND, SWEETHEART WITHOUT LOVER.

ALTHOUGH the Queen had sent for Andrée, although she expected her, yet when the announcement was made, she trembled from top to toe at the five words spoken by Weber.

This was because the Queen could not conceal from herself, that in the compact (for it amounted to that) made between herself and Andrée, — in the early days, when they were both young girls, and met at the Château Taverney, — there was an agreement for the interchange of friendship and assistance, in which Marie Antoinette had always been the benefited party.

Now nothing is so annoying to kings as obligations incurred, above all when the obligations grasp the very roots of the heart.

The Queen sent for Andrée, believing she had many things to blame her for ; but not one of them could she remember when she stood face to face with that young wife. She could only think of obligations which lay on the other side.

As for Andrée, she was always the same, — cool and calm, — pure as a diamond, but equally cutting and invulnerable.

The Queen hesitated an instant as to what name she should choose in addressing the white apparition, which glided from the shadow of the doorway into the half-lighted room, and came slowly within the circle of light

projected from the three candles in the candelabra on the table, whereon the Queen was resting her elbow.

At last, stretching out her hand to her former friend, she said: "You are welcome to-day, as always, Andrée."

Strong and resolute as Andrée was when she came to the Tuileries, this salutation made her tremble in her turn. She detected, in the words spoken to her by the Queen, some traces of the tone formerly used by her Majesty when she was only the Dauphin's bride.

"Need I say," responded Andrée, meeting the occasion with her customary candor and perspicacity, "that if her Majesty had always spoken to me like that, there would have been no need to send for me beyond the confines of the palace, when her Majesty wished to talk with me?"

Nothing could have better aided the Queen than the way in which Andrée entered at once into the matter, and she hastened to avail herself of this overture.

"Alas, Andrée," said the Queen, "one so beautiful, so pure, so chaste as yourself, one whose soul has never been troubled by hatred, one whose heart has never been upset by love, one who is covered only by thunder-clouds which disappear, — and who then shines forth like a star, which reappears the more brilliantly in the firmament, when the wind has swept the storm away, — a woman like yourself must learn that all women, even those in high places, have not your incomparable serenity, — myself especially, who demand the help which you have so often generously accorded."

"The Queen," responded Andrée, "speaks of a time which I had forgotten, and which I believed she no longer remembered."

"That answer is severe, Andrée, and perhaps I merit

it ; and you have the right to so answer me. — It is true ! So long as I was happy, I did not recompense your devotion, perhaps because no human power, not even the royal power, afforded the means of discharging such a debt as mine to you. You have believed me ungrateful ; but perhaps what you mistook for ingratitude, was only inability."

"I might have the right to accuse you, Madame," said Andrée, "if ever I had wished or asked anything of the Queen, and she had opposed my wishes and repulsed my request ; but why should your Majesty think me fault-finding, when I have neither asked nor desired anything at your hands."

"Do you wish me to tell you, my dear Andrée ? It is just this indifference of yours, to everything in the world, that bothers us about you. Yes, you seem to me superhuman, a creature from another sphere, brought hither by a whirlwind, and hurled into our midst, like those meteoric stones, purified by fire, which come tumbling upon us from nobody knows what distant sun. Consequently we are terrified at our own weakness, when brought face to face with one who is never weak ; but it is said that supreme indulgence must reside in such supreme goodness, that one should bathe one's soul in the purest spring ; and in this moment of deep misery, what could I do, Andrée, but send for consolation to that lofty being whose blame I fear ?"

"Alas, Madame," said Andrée, "if this is really why you want me, I sadly fear you will be disappointed in your expectations."

"Andrée, Andrée ! You forget under what terrible circumstances you have already sustained me and consoled me."

Andrée's color changed noticeably. The Queen saw
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her totter and close her eyes, as if her strength was almost exhausted, and made a motion with her hand and arm, to draw Andrée down upon the same sofa with herself; but Andrée resisted, and remained standing.

"Madame," she said, "if your Majesty pities her faithful servant, you will spare her these reminiscences, which she almost believed were forgotten. She is but a poor comforter, who asks consolation of no one, not even of God, because she doubts if God himself is not powerless to assuage some sorrows."

The Queen fixed on Andrée her acute and penetrating gaze. "Sorrows?" she said. "Have you then other sorrows than those which you have confided to me?"

Andrée did not answer.

"Listen to me! The hour has come when we must have some understanding, and I want to question you on that account. — You love Charny!"

Andrée turned pale as death, and remained speechless.

"Do you not love the Count?" repeated the Queen.

"Yes," answered Andrée.

Like a wounded lioness the Queen uttered a groan, and said: "I suspected as much? How long have you loved him?"

"Since the first hour I saw him."

The Queen recoiled in fear before the marble statue who thus unveiled her soul.

"And you were silent?" asked the Queen.

"You know that better than anybody else, Madame."

"And why were you so?"

"Because I perceived that *you* loved him," said Andrée.

"Do you mean to say that you then loved him more than I, forasmuch as I saw nothing of *your* feelings?"

"Ah," said Andrée, bitterly, "you saw nothing else, because you had his love."

"Yes ! and now I see the truth, because he no longer loves me. That is what you mean, is it not ?"

Andrée was silent.

"Speak !" said the Queen, grasping her not only by the hand, but by the arm. "Acknowledge that he loves me no longer."

Andrée responded neither by word, gesture, nor sign.

"This is death," cried the Queen. "Kill me then, at once, by letting me know that he loves me no longer. — Come, speak ! He loves me no longer, — is it not so ?"

"The passion and indifference of the Count are his own secrets. It is not for me to unveil them."

"His secrets ? They are no longer his alone, for I presume he has made you his confidant," said the Queen bitterly.

"Charny has never spoken a word to me about his love for you, or his indifference."

"Not even this morning ?"

"I did not see him this morning."

The Queen looked at Andrée searchingly, as if she would fathom the depths of her heart.

"Will you affirm also your ignorance of the Count's departure ?"

"I will not say that."

"How did you know of his departure, if you did not see him ?"

"He wrote and told me about it."

"Ah, he wrote you," said the Queen. As Richard Third exclaimed, in a supreme moment, "My kingdom for a horse !" so Marie Antoinette was ready to cry out, "My crown for that letter !"

Andrée understood the Queen's wish ; but she could not forego the pleasure of leaving her rival in trepidation for a while.

"And that letter, which the Count wrote you on the verge of his departure, I am sure you have it not with you."

"You err, Madame," said Andrée; "it is here."

Taking the letter from her bosom, warm with her glow and embalmed with her perfume, she extended it towards the Queen.

The latter took it, shivering, pressed it between her fingers, not knowing whether she ought to keep it or return it, — regarding Andrée meanwhile with a frowning brow. Then, casting aside her scruples, she said: "The temptation is too strong!"

She opened the letter, leaned towards the light of the candelabra, and read as follows:

MADAME: I leave Paris in an hour, under an official order from the King. I can tell you neither whither I go, why I go, nor how long I shall remain away from Paris, — things which probably matter very little to you, but which I should nevertheless be glad to communicate, if authorized so to do.

For an instant I intended calling upon you, to announce my departure by the living voice; but I did not dare do so without your permission.

The Queen had ascertained what she wished to know, and would have returned the letter to Andrée; but the latter said to her, as if it was now for her to command, not to obey: "Read to the end, Madame!" and so the Queen read on:

I declined the last mission offered me, because I then believed, poor fool! that some mutual sympathy would detain me in Paris; but since then, alas! I have acquired proof to the contrary, and I accept with joy an opportunity for going far away from hearts to which I am indifferent.

If during my journey anything should happen to me, as to my brother George, all my plans are made; so that you will

be the *first* to be informed of it, if any misfortune overtakes me, and restores you once more to your liberty. You must know, however, Madame, what deep admiration has been roused in my heart by your sublime devotion, so ill recompensed by one for whom you — young, beautiful, and born to be happy — have sacrificed youth, beauty, and happiness.

Finally, Madame, all I ask of God and yourself is, that you sometimes accord a thought to the unhappy one, who has so tardily perceived the value of the treasure he possesses.

With heartfelt respect,

OLIVER DE CHARNY.

The Queen handed Andrée the letter, who this time accepted it; but her nerveless, almost inanimate hand fell by her side, and she murmured with a sigh: “Well, Madame, have you been betrayed? Have I been faithless — I do not say to the promise made you, for I never made you such a promise, but to the trust you reposed in me?”

“Forgive me, Andrée,” said the Queen, “but I have suffered so much!”

“*You* have suffered! You dare tell me, to my very face, that you have suffered? What then shall I say of myself? I will not say what I have suffered, for not a single word could I use that has not already served other women to blazon the same idea, and with less cause. No, I should need a new word, unknown and unheard of, to sum up all my sorrows, and give expression to all my tortures. *You* have suffered? And yet you have never seen the man whom you loved, Madame, indifferent to your love, kneeling, heart in hand, to another woman! You have not seen your brother, jealous of that other woman, — whom he adored in silence, as a pagan adores his deity, — quarrel with the man whom she loved! You have never heard the man whom you loved — when

smitten by your brother, with a wound believed to be mortal — appeal, in his delirium, only to that *other* woman, whose confidant you were! You have not seen that other woman glide like a ghost through the corridors, where you yourself wandered, in order to hear those delirious accents, which proved that if an insane passion does not outlive this life, it at least accompanies a lover to the very threshold of the tomb! You have not seen this man return to life, by a miracle of nature and science, and then rise from his bed, only to fall at the feet of your rival, — your *rival*, — yes, Madame; for in love it is the grandeur of passion which levels all ranks! You have not, in your despair, retired to a convent at the age of twenty-five, wishing to extinguish, at the frozen feet of the crucifix, the love which consumed you! Once more, after a year of prayer, sleeplessness, fasting, fruitless desires, pitiful moans, — when you hoped, if not to extinguish, at least to be able to put to sleep the flame which consumed your life, — you have not seen your former rival, who had comprehended nothing, guessed nothing, summon you from your solitude, to ask of you — what? to demand, in the name of the old friendship, which suffering could not alter, in the name of her safety as a wife, in the name of compromised royalty, — to demand that you should become the wife, — of whom? Of the man whom you had worshipped for years, — to become a wife without a husband, conveniently used as a screen, to stand between the watchfulness of the world and the unlawful happiness of another, as a shroud conceals the corpse from the public eye. You have never, — governed, I will not say by pity, — for jealous passion has no mercy, as well you know, Madame, — you who have made me your scapegoat, — I say *you* have never undertaken such an enormous sacrifice, even through a sense of

duty ! You have not heard the priest ask you to take for your husband a man who would never be your real spouse ! You have not felt this man place upon your finger a gold ring, pledge of eternal union, which for you was but a worthless and empty token ! You have not seen your husband quit your side an hour after the ceremony, never to return, except as the lover of your rival ! Ah, Madame, these few years, now rolled away, have been cruel years."

The Queen stretched forth her faltering hand, seeking Andrée's ; but Andrée withdrew her own.

"As for me," continued the young woman, becoming the accuser, "I promised nothing, but you see what I have done ; but as for you, Madame, you promised me two things —"

"Andrée, Andrée !" begged the Queen.

"You promised me never to see Charny again, — a promise the more sacred, because I did not exact it."

"Andrée !"

"Then again, you promised — oh, this time, in writing — to treat me as a sister, — another pledge the more sacred, because unsolicited."

"Andrée !"

"Must I recall to you the terms of that promise, made at such a solemn time, at the moment when I was about to sacrifice for you my life, — more than my life, my love, — my happiness in this world and my salvation in the next ? Yes, my salvation in another world, for our sins are not alone in our deeds, Madame, and who can assure me that the Lord will pardon my mad desires, my impious vows ? Well, in that hour of sacrifice you gave me a letter. I can see that letter yet, each word flaming before my eyes." Then Andrée repeated the letter, which was couched in the following terms :

ANDRÉE: You have saved me! My honor owes itself only to you; my life is yours. In the name of that honor which costs you so dearly, I swear that you may call me your sister. Do so, and you will not see me blush. I place this writing in your own hands. It is the pledge of my gratitude, — it is my wedding-gift.

Yours is the most noble of hearts, and will appreciate the worth of what I freely offer.

MARIE ANTOINETTE.

The Queen gave a dejected sigh.

"Oh, I understand," resumed Andrée, "because I burned this note, you supposed I had forgotten its contents! No, Madame, no! You see that I recollect every word of it, from beginning to end, though *you* appear to remember not one line. Ah me, how well I remember it, and more —"

"Oh forgive me, forgive me, Andrée. I have believed of late that he loved thee!"

"Perhaps you believed it the law of the heart, that because he loved you less, he must love another more?"

Andrée had suffered so much, that now she became cruel.

"You also, — you have perceived that he loved me less?" said the Queen, with an exclamation of grief.

Andrée answered not; but she looked at the distracted Queen, and something like a smile curled her lip.

"But what must I do, — my God, what must I do to keep his love? My life is wrapt up in it. Oh, if thou knowest, Andrée, my friend, my sister, — tell me, I beg thee, I adjure thee!" and the Queen extended both hands to Andrée, who recoiled a step.

"How can I know, Madame, — I, whom he has never loved?"

"Oh, but he may love thee! Some day he may come to thy feet, make honorable amends for the past, and ask pardon for all he has made thee suffer; and suffering is so swiftly forgotten in the arms of one whom we love; pardon is so speedily accorded to those who have made us suffer."

"In case that misery should come, — yes, Madame, it would probably be unfortunate for us both! — do you forget that before being truly the wife of the Count, there is a great secret which he should learn, a disclosure to be made to him, — a terrible secret, a fatal disclosure, which would instantly paralyze the love which you fear? Do you forget that it would remain for me to recount to him what I long ago related to you?"

"You would tell him that your chastity had been violated by Gilbert? You would tell him that you have a child?"

"For what do you take me, Madame," said Andrée, "that you should manifest such a doubt?"

The Queen breathed again, and said: "Then you will do nothing to bring Charny back to you?"

"Nothing, Madame, — no more in the future than I have in the past."

"You will not tell him, you will not let him even suspect that you love him?"

"Unless he comes to tell me he loves me, — no, Madame!"

"And if he should come and tell you so; if you tell him that you love him, you swear to me —"

"Oh Madame!" said Andrée, interrupting the Queen.

"Yes," said the Queen, "you are right, Andrée, — my sister, my friend; and I am unjust, cruel, unreasonable. Oh, but when all forsake me, friends, power, reputation,

I would at least keep that love for which I have sacrificed reputation, power, and friends."

"Then, Madame," said Andrée, with that icy coolness which she had not thrown off for an instant, even when she spoke of her own tortures, "you have some new agreements to demand of me, some fresh orders to transmit?"

"No, nothing, I thank you. I wished to offer you my friendship, and you refuse it. — Andrée, Andrée, at least bear my gratitude away with you!"

Andrée made a motion of the hand which seemed to repel this second sentiment of the Queen, as she had rejected the first. With a chilling and profound reverence she went out slowly and silently, like a spectre.

"Thou art right, — body of ice, heart of diamond, soul of fire, — to accept neither my gratitude nor my friendship; for I feel, and I ask the pardon of the Lord Christ for it, that I hate thee as I never hated before. If he loves thee not already, — oh, I am sure of it, — he will love thee hereafter."

Calling Weber she said: "Weber, hast thou seen Monsieur Gilbert?"

"Yes, your Majesty," replied the attendant.

"At what time to-morrow will he come?"

"At ten, Madame."

"Very well, Weber. Tell my ladies I will go to bed to-night without their assistance, and that as I am tired and nearly ill, I wish them to let me sleep till ten o'clock. The first and only person I shall receive will be Doctor Gilbert."

CHAPTER XXV.

FRANÇOIS THE BAKER.

WE will not undertake to tell how these two women passed the night.

Not till nine o'clock in the morning do we again see the Queen, her eyes red with weeping, her cheeks pale with want of sleep. At eight o'clock, — that is, near the dawning, for this was the sad period of the year, when the days are brief and dull, — at eight o'clock she forsook her bed, whereon she had unsuccessfully sought repose during the earlier hours of the night; though during the later hours she had fallen into feverish and agitated slumber.

Although no one dared enter her chamber, after the orders she had given, she soon began to hear those comings and goings, outside of her apartments, those sudden noises and prolonged murmurs, which indicate that something extraordinary is occurring outside.

Just as the Queen completed her toilet the clock sounded nine.

Among the confused sounds, which vibrated through the corridors, she heard Weber's voice, enjoining silence.

She summoned her faithful attendant. In an instant the tumult ceased and the door opened.

"What is going on in the palace, Weber?" she asked. "What does all this uproar mean?"

"It appears, Madame, that there is some disturbance in the Cité, the ancient part of Paris," replied Weber.

"A disturbance? What about?"

"Nobody yet knows, Madame; only it is said there is a bread riot."

Formerly the idea would not have entered the Queen's mind that there are people who die of hunger; but since the ride from Versailles, when she heard the Dauphin ask for bread, without being able to give it to him, she understood better the distress occasioned by famine and hunger.

"Poor souls!" she said, recalling the shouts she had heard on her journey, and Gilbert's explication of them. "Well, now they can see that it is not the fault of the Baker or the Bakeress, if they have no bread."

Then she asked aloud: "Is it feared that this disturbance will become serious?"

"I do not know what to tell you, Madame, for no two reports agree."

"Well then, run as far as the Cité, Weber, — it is n't far from here, — and ascertain with thine own eyes what is going on. Then come and tell me."

"And Monsieur Gilbert?" asked Weber.

"Tell Campan or Misery that I expect him, and one or the other can introduce him."

As Weber disappeared she threw this last injunction after him: "Tell them not to keep him waiting; for he is posted about all that's going on, and can explain matters."

Weber went out of the palace, passed through the wicket on the side of the Louvre, hastened over the bridge; and, guided by the clamor, and following the living wave which rolled towards the Archbishopal Palace, he soon reached the Purview of Notre Dame.

As he neared this old part of Paris, the crowd increased from far and near, and the outcries became louder.

In the midst of these outcries, or rather of these howls, might be heard voices, such voices as are only to be heard in the sky in hours of tempest, or on earth in days of Revolution ; and these voices shouted : " He is a famine-breeder ! Kill him, kill him ! To the lamp-post, to the lamp-post ! "

The voices of thousands, who did not even know what the noise was all about, among which could be distinguished the voices of women, repeated the denunciation, in the expectation of one of those spectacles which make the heart of a crowd leap for joy : " A famine-breeder ! To death with him ! To the lamp-post ! "

All at once Weber was struck by one of those concussions sometimes felt where a great mass of people is compacted together, and he saw, coming up the Rue Chanoinesse, a human tide, a living cataract, in the midst whereof was struggling a pallid victim with torn clothes.

After him the populace surged, for against him were raised all these cries, these howls, these menaces.

One man only defended him against the mob ; only one man tried to be a dyke to stem this human torrent. The one man who felt this one touch of pity, in the face of the animosity of ten, twenty, or a hundred men, was Gilbert. Some amongst the crowd recognized him, and began to call out : " It's Doctor Gilbert, — a patriot, the friend of Lafayette and of Bailly. Listen to the Doctor ! "

At these outcries there was a halt, like the lull between two storm-waves. Weber profited by this calm to push his way towards the Doctor, whom he could hardly reach.

" Monsieur Gilbert ! " he called out.

Gilbert turned himself towards the side whence came the voice.

"Ah, is it you, Weber?" he said. Then he beckoned him nearer, and whispered: "Go and tell the Queen that I shall be late at my appointment, for I am busy saving a man's life."

"Oh yes, yes!" exclaimed the unfortunate victim, overhearing these last words, "you will save me, won't you, Doctor? Tell them I am innocent. Tell them my young wife is on the eve of motherhood. — I swear that I did n't conceal any bread, Doctor!"

The poor fellow's prayers and excuses only added to the smouldering hatred and wrath of the crowd. Their shouts redoubled, and menaces threatened to resolve themselves into deeds.

"My friends," cried Gilbert, throwing himself with superhuman force against the foremost furious pursuers, "this man is a Frenchman, a citizen like yourselves. You should not, you will not choke a fellow without a hearing. Take him to the district court, and then we will see."

"Yes, that's right!" was called out by those who had recognized the Doctor.

"Monsieur Gilbert," said Weber, "hold on, and I will notify the officers at the station, which is only two steps off. In five minutes they will be here." Then he slipped away among the crowd, without even tarrying for Gilbert's approval.

Meanwhile four or five men had come to the Doctor's support, and made with their bodies a sort of barricade around the unfortunate man, menaced by the anger of the crowd. This rampart, slight as it was, restrained for a moment the assailants, who continued, however, to drown with their clamor the voices of Gilbert and the loyal citizens who had rallied about him.

At the end of five minutes there was a movement in

the crowd, succeeded by a murmur, and this murmur soon took the form of words: "The officers, the officers of the district!"

In the presence of these officers the curses ceased, and the crowd fell apart. Perhaps the assassins had not yet received their final orders.

The victim was conducted to the Hôtel de Ville. He stuck close to the Doctor, and held him by the arm, which he would not release.

Meanwhile, who was this man? We will tell you.

He was a poor baker, named Denis François, whom you have already heard of as furnishing bread to the members of the Assembly.

That morning an old woman went into his shop on the Rue Marché Palu, just as he had distributed his sixth batch of bread, and was beginning to bake the seventh. This old woman demanded a loaf.

"There's not one left," said François; "but wait for the seventh baking, and you shall be then attended to first."

"I want a roll right off," said the woman, "here's your money!"

"But I tell you there are no more," said the baker.

"Let me see!"

"Oh yes," replied the baker, "go in, look for yourself, search! I ask nothing better."

The old woman entered, searched, sniffed, rummaged, opened a cupboard, and in that cupboard she found three four-pound loaves of stale bread, which the apprentices had put aside for themselves.

She took one of them, and went out without paying for it; and when the baker protested, she stirred up the passers-by, declaring that François was a famine-breeder, and kept back half the supply of his ovens.

This cry of *famine-breeder* doomed François to a most certain death.

An old recruiting officer of dragoons, named Fleur d'Épine, who was drinking in a cabaret across the street, ran out of the cabaret, and repeated, in a tipsy voice, the old woman's outcry.

Hearing this double clamor people came bustling along, made inquiries, learned what was the matter, took up the same cry, rushed to the baker's shop, forced their way by the four men stationed at the door by the police, — as at the doors of all the bakeries, — and ransacked the shop. Besides the two loaves of dry bread, left and denounced by the old woman, they found ten dozen small fresh rolls reserved for the Deputies, who held their sessions in the Archbishop's Palace, only a hundred paces distant.

From that moment the victim was condemned. It was no longer one voice, but a hundred, two hundred, a thousand voices, which cried "Famine-breeder!" It was the whole crowd which shouted, "To the lamp-post!"

At this time the Doctor was returning from a visit to his son, whom he had replaced with the Abbé Bérardier at the College Louis le Grand. His attention was attracted by the noise. He saw a whole crowd demanding the death of one man, and ran to the help of that man.

In a few words he learned from François what the trouble was all about. Convinced of the baker's innocence he endeavored to defend him. Then the crowd hustled along their victim and his friend together, including them both in the same anathema, and ready to kill both at one blow.

It was at this crisis that Weber, sent by the Queen, arrived in Notre Dame Square, and recognized Gilbert.

Soon after the departure of Weber, as we know, the

district officers arrived, and the unlucky baker was forthwith conducted to the Hôtel de Ville, under their escort.

The prisoner, the district officials, the excited populace, all crowded helter-skelter towards the Hôtel de Ville, so that in an instant the square was encumbered with unemployed laborers and poor devils dying of hunger, always ready to mix themselves up in a riot, and ascribe to whomsoever was suspected of being the cause of any public misery, the ills they personally endured.

No sooner had the ill-fated François disappeared under the yawning gateway of the Hôtel de Ville, than the cries redoubled. It seemed to these men as if the prey which rightfully belonged to them had been snatched away.

Several individuals of sinister mien squirmed through the crowd, whispering : "He's a famine-breeder, hired by the Court. That's why they try to save him !"

These words, "He's a famine-breeder," meandering amidst the famished populace like some cunning flame, excited their malice and ignited their anger.

Unhappily it was still early, and not one of the men who had most influence with the populace was on hand, — Bailly or Lafayette ; and this was well known to those who circulated the accusation : "He's a famine-breeder, a famine-breeder !"

At last, when the accused did not reappear, the cries changed into one immense clamor, the threats into a universal howl.

The men of whom we have spoken glided through the porch, and crept along the galleries, penetrating to the hall where they found the unhappy baker, whom Gilbert was trying to exculpate as best he could.

On the other side the neighbors of François, who had followed him in the tumult, testified to what he had

done since the beginning of the Revolution, as proof of his zeal. They said that he had heated his ovens as many as ten times a day; that when his fellow-bakers were out of flour, he had supplied them with his own; that in order to serve his customers more promptly, he had hired, in addition to his own furnaces, one belonging to a neighboring pastry-cook, where he could dry his wood.

In these depositions it was shown that this man merited reward instead of punishment; but in the square, through the lobbies, and up into the trial-hall the cry was continued, "A famine-breeder!" and the death of the culprit was demanded.

Suddenly an unexpected irruption is made into the hall, cleaving asunder the line of National Guardsmen surrounding François, and separating him from his protectors. Gilbert, crowded back to the side of the improvised tribunal, sees twenty arms extended. Seized, dragged down, pinioned, the prisoner cries for help, for succor, and vainly lifts his supplicating hands. Gilbert makes a frantic but useless effort to rejoin François. The living avenue, through which the victim disappears, closes gradually behind him. Like a swimmer absorbed by a whirlpool he struggles an instant, his hands clasped, despair in his eyes, his voice stifled in his throat. Then the human wave overwhelms him again, and the gulf swallows him up.

From that moment he is lost. Rolled from top to bottom of the stairway, he receives a wound at each step. When he reaches the entrance his body is one vast bruise. He no longer begs for life, but for death.

Where did Death hide himself at that epoch, that he was so ready to come when he was called.

In a second the head of the wretched man is separated from his body and elevated on the end of a pike.

Hearing the outcry in the street, those rioters who are in the galleries and in the halls precipitate themselves downstairs. They must see the spectacle to the end ! It is a curiosity, — a man's head on a pike. They have not seen one since the Sixth of October, and now it is the Twenty-first !

"Oh Billot, Billot," muttered Gilbert, hastening out of the hall, "thou art fortunate in being away from Paris !"

He crossed the Place de Grève, and walked along the banks of the River Seine, — the bleeding head, with its howling escort, rapidly getting farther and farther away, over the Bridge of Notre Dame. About midway along the Quay Pelletier he felt some one touch his arm.

He raised his head, made an exclamation, and was about to stop and speak ; but the man who had recognized him slipped a billet into his hand, laid his finger on his mouth, and hastened along by the side of the Archbishop's Palace.

Evidently this personage wished to preserve his incognito, but a market-woman noticed him, clapped her hands, and cried out : "Ah ha ! It's our little mother Mirabeau."

"Long live Mirabeau !" cried five hundred voices. "Long live the Defender of the People ! Long live the patriot, the orator !"

The tail-end of the procession which was following the head of the ill-starred baker heard this cry, and came back to form an escort for Mirabeau, who was thus accompanied by a tremendous crowd to the doors of the Archbishop's Palace.

It was indeed Mirabeau, on his way to a session of the Assembly. Having encountered Gilbert, he gave him a billet, which he had just written on a wine-seller's counter, and intended sending to the Doctor's house.

CHAPTER XXVI.

ADVANTAGES TO BE DERIVED FROM A SEVERED HEAD.

THE billet slipped into his hand by Mirabeau was hastily read by Gilbert, who then read it a second time slowly, put it into his vest pocket, called a cab, which he ordered driven to the Tuileries.

On his arrival there he found all the gratings closed. The sentinels at the gates had been doubled, by order of Lafayette, who, hearing there was trouble in the city, first took measures for the security of the King and Queen, and then betook himself to the locality where he had been told the disturbance arose.

By making himself known to the porter at the gate opening on the Rue d'Échelle, Gilbert gained admittance to the royal apartments.

As soon as she saw him, Madame Campan, according to the Queen's orders, at once received and introduced him; as Weber, in obedience to the Queen, had gone back for further news.

At the sight of Gilbert the Queen uttered a cry. Part of the Doctor's coat and frill had been torn in his struggle to rescue the unlucky François, and there were several spots of blood on his shirt.

"I ask pardon of her Majesty," he said, "for presenting myself before her in this condition; but I have already made her wait a long time, in spite of myself, and I did not wish to keep her in suspense any longer."

"And that unfortunate man, Monsieur?"

"He is dead, Madame ! He was indeed assassinated piecemeal."

"Was he at all blameworthy ?"

"He was innocent, Madame."

"Oh Monsieur, these are the fruits of your Revolution ! After having gorged themselves with great lords, public functionaries, guardsmen, they now devour each other ! But is there no means of meting out justice to those assassins ?"

"We shall strive for it, Madame ; but it is more important now to prevent murders than to punish the murderers."

"My God, how can that be done ? The King and myself would ask nothing better."

"Madame, all these misdeeds arise from the distrust felt by the people towards the official agents. Place at the head of the government men who have popular confidence, and nothing of the sort will happen again."

"Ah yes, always the same democratic cry, — Mirabeau and Lafayette !"

"I hoped the Queen had sent for me to say that she had prevailed upon the King to cease his hostility to this combination which I proposed."

"To begin with, Doctor," she replied, "you fall into a grave error, — one into which many others fall besides yourself. You fancy that I influence the King ? You imagine that the King follows my ideas ? You deceive yourself. If anybody can influence the King, it is Madame Elizabeth, and not myself ; and in proof of this, let me tell you that no longer ago than yesterday he sent one of my personal attendants on a mission, Monsieur de Charny, without my knowing either whither he goes, or for what purpose."

"Nevertheless, if the Queen can ever overcome her

repugnance to Mirabeau, I will be responsible for bringing the King to my wishes."

"Let us see!" said the Queen, quickly. "Will Monsieur tell me that he thinks my repugnance groundless?"

"In politics, Madame, there should be neither personal sympathies nor antipathies. In politics we must have either agreement in principles, or a combination of interests; and I must acknowledge to your Majesty — to the shame of humanity, be it spoken! — that union of interests is far more reliable than agreement of ideas."

"Doctor, would you seriously advise me to trust a man who brought about the Fifth and Sixth of October, and bargain with one who has publicly insulted me on the rostrum?"

"Madame, believe me, Mirabeau was not responsible for those days. It was famine, poverty, misery, which then began their work in the daylight; but there is a powerful arm, mysterious and terrible, which tries to accomplish its work in the night. Perhaps some day I may even have to defend you in that direction, and wrestle with this hellish power which pursues you, — and not only you, but all other crowned heads, — not only the throne of France, but all thrones on earth. As truly as I have the honor of putting my life at your feet, — and at the King's, Madame, — I assure you that Mirabeau was not responsible for those dreadful days; and he was first informed of the rioting at the Assembly, as others were, — only perhaps a trifle sooner than the others, — by a note which was sent to him, stating that the populace were marching on Versailles."

"Do you also deny, what is notoriously public, the insults which he bestowed upon me from the tribune?"

"Madame, Mirabeau is one of those men who know their own value. Such a man feels exasperated — seeing

what he is fitted for, of what use he might be — when he finds that his rulers abstain from employing him. Yes, to turn all eyes towards himself, Madame, Mirabeau would even be guilty of slander; for he would rather have the illustrious daughter of Maria Theresa, either the Queen or the woman, look upon him angrily, than not to notice him at all.”

“And you believe he would consent to be on our side, Doctor?”

“He is entirely yours, Madame. When Mirabeau avoids royalty, he is like a skittish horse, who only needs to feel the bridle and spur of his rider, to return to his proper gait.”

“But, belonging already to Orleans, he can surely not attach himself to us, to the King, to the people, — to every party in the world?”

“There is your mistake, Madame.”

“Mirabeau is not committed to Orleans?” said the Queen.

“He is so little bound to Orleans, that when he heard the Prince had retired to England, because of Lafayette’s decisive hints, Mirabeau said, as he crumpled in his hand the note from Monsieur de Lauzun, announcing this departure: ‘They pretend I belong to that man’s party! I would n’t have him for one of my lackeys!’”

“Well, that reconciles me to him a little,” said the Queen, trying to smile, “and if I thought we could really rely upon him — ”

“Well?”

“Well, perhaps I should be less averse to the King’s reconciliation with him.”

“Madame, the day after the rabble brought your Majesty from Versailles, as well as the King and the royal family, I met Monsieur de Mirabeau — ”

"Intoxicated with his great triumph of the evening previous?"

"Disturbed by the perils you had encountered, and those into which you might hereafter run."

"Indeed! Are you sure of this?" asked the Queen, with a mistrustful air.

"Do you wish me to report his very words?"

"Yes, if you will do me that pleasure."

"Well, here they are, word for word; for I carved them on my memory, hoping I might one day have an opportunity of repeating them to your Majesty: 'If you have any means of making the King and Queen listen to you,' said Mirabeau, 'persuade them that both France and themselves will be ruined, if the royal family does not leave Paris. I have a plan for helping them to do so. You may add the assurance that they may reckon on my help.'"

The Queen became thoughtful and said: "Then Mirabeau's advice, too, is that we quit Paris?"

"That was his opinion at that time."

"Which he has since changed?"

"Yes, if I can credit a note which I received half an hour ago."

"From whom?"

"From himself."

"Might one see that billet?"

"It was designed for your Majesty," said Gilbert, drawing the paper from his pocket.

"Your Majesty must excuse everything," he added, "for it was written on cheap copying paper, in some shop."

"Oh, don't worry yourself about that. Paper and place were quite in harmony with the politics of the hour!"

The Queen took the letter, and read as follows :

The occurrence of to-day alters the aspect of things.

Great advantage may be derived from that severed head.

The Assembly will be frightened and demand martial law.

Mirabeau may advocate and carry the vote for martial law.

Mirabeau may argue that there is no security except in giving more power to the Executive arm of the government.

Mirabeau may attack Necker, on account of his subsidies, and upset them.

In place of the Necker Cabinet, a new ministry should be formed, with Mirabeau and Lafayette ; and Mirabeau will be responsible.

"Well," said the Queen, "this memorandum is not signed."

"Have I not had the honor of informing your Majesty that Mirabeau himself handed it to me?"

"What do you think of it?"

"My opinion is, Madame, that Mirabeau is perfectly right, and that the alliance he proposes alone can save France."

"If Mirabeau should send me, through yourself, a Memorial about the situation, and also the prospectus for a new ministry, I will place them under the King's eyes."

"And your Majesty will approve them?"

"I will approve them."

"Meanwhile," said Gilbert inquiringly, "as the first pledge, Mirabeau must support the resolution for martial law, and demand that greater power shall be given to the Executive Department?"

"Let him do so."

"In exchange, in case the removal of Necker becomes urgent, the ministry of Lafayette and Mirabeau will not be unfavorably received?"

"By myself? No!" said the Queen. "I wish to

prove that I am ready to sacrifice all my personal resentments for the good of the State. Only you must remember, I do not answer for the King."

"Will *Monsieur* abet you in this matter?"

"I conjecture that Provence has affairs of his own, which will prevent him from endorsing others."

"And the Queen has no idea what *Monsieur's* projects may be?" queried Gilbert.

"I believe he is of Mirabeau's former opinion, that the King had better leave Paris."

"Your Majesty authorizes me to tell Mirabeau that his Memorial, and his scheme for a new cabinet, are asked for by your Majesty?"

"I will let Monsieur Gilbert judge for himself how far it is necessary to be on one's guard in dealing with such a man, — one who is our friend to-day, but may become our enemy to-morrow."

"As to that point, Madame, rely upon me; but as the situation is grave, there is no time to be lost. Permit me to go to the Assembly, and I will try to see Mirabeau to-day. If I see him, your Majesty shall hear from me in two hours."

The Queen made a gesture of assent and dismissal, and Gilbert withdrew.

A quarter of an hour later he was at the Assembly hall. The members were in commotion on account of the crime committed at their doors, and against a man who had been, in a certain way, their servant. They came and went from the tribune to their benches, and from their benches into the lobby.

Mirabeau alone remained in his place, unmoved. He waited, with his gaze fixed on the place reserved for visitors. When he saw Gilbert, his leonine face lighted up.

Gilbert made him a sign, to which he responded by

an affirmative nod; so Gilbert tore a page from his memorandum-book, and wrote as follows:

Your propositions were welcomed, at least by one of the two parties,—the one whom you believe, and I also, to be the most influential of the two.

A Memorial is requested for to-morrow, and a cabinet plan for to-day.

Get more power for the Executive Administration, and the Executive will rely on you.

He folded this paper in the form of a letter, and wrote the address:

To M. le Comte de Mirabeau.

Calling a messenger he bade him take this billet to its destination.

From his standpoint Gilbert could see the messenger enter the aisles, direct his steps towards the Deputy from Aix, and deliver to him the billet.

Mirabeau read it with such an expression of utter indifference, that it would have been impossible for his nearest neighbor to guess that the paper he had received corresponded with his inmost desires. With the same indifference he traced a few lines on the sheet of paper which happened to lie in front of him, folded the paper carelessly, and gave it to the usher, saying: "For the person who handed you the billet you just brought me."

Gilbert opened the paper with avidity. It contained these few lines, which might have assured to France a different future, if the plan proposed therein had been put into execution:

I will speak.

To-morrow I will send the Memorial.

Here is the list requested,—which might be modified in respect to two or three names.

NECKER: Prime Minister.

This name almost made Gilbert doubt if the billet he was reading could be from Mirabeau's hand ; but as a parenthetical note followed this name, as was the case with names, Gilbert read on :

NECKER : Prime Minister. (It will be necessary to render him as powerless as he is incapable ; but he must be kept on the King's side, for popularity's sake.)

ARCHBISHOP OF BORDEAUX : Chancellor. (He should be advised to choose his assistants with great care.)

LIANCOURT : Minister of War. (He has honor, firmness, and personal affection for the King, which will give the King a sense of security.)

ROCHEFOUCAULT : Master of the Royal Household. (Thouret with him.)

LA MARCK : for the Navy. (He cannot have the War Department, which must be given to Liancourt. La Marck has fidelity, character, and executive ability.)

BISHOP OF AUTUN : Secretary of the Treasury. (His proposition in regard to the clergy entitles him to that place. Laborde with him.)

MIRABEAU : in the Royal Council, without any special department. (Petty scruples about worldly speech are out of season. Government must loudly affirm that its chief representatives are henceforth right principles, character, and talent.)

TARGET : Mayor of Paris. (The *Basoche*, or jurisdiction of the Parliamentary officials, should belong to him.)

LAFAYETTE : in the Council — Marshal of France — Generalissimo for a period, to reorganize the army.

MONTMORIN : Governor, Duke, and Peer. (His debts to be paid.)

SÉGUR : Minister of Foreign Affairs.

MOUNIER : Royal Librarian.

CHAPELIER : Public Works.

At the bottom of this memorandum was written a second.

Lafayette's Preferences.

Minister of Justice : ROCHEFOUCAULT.
 Minister of Foreign Affairs : BISHOP OF AUTUN.
 Minister of Finance : LAMBERT, HALLER, or CLAVIÈRES.
 Minister of the Navy :

The Queen's Preferences.

Minister of War or Navy : LA MARCK.
 Chief of the Council of Instruction and Public Education :
 ABBÉ SIEYÈS.
 Keeper of the Privy Seal :

This second memorandum indicates the changes and modifications which might be made in the combination proposed by Mirabeau, without opposing any obstacle to his views or interfering with his projects.¹

These notes were all written in a slightly tremulous hand, which shows that Mirabeau felt great emotion, though so calm on the surface.

Gilbert read hastily, tore out a fresh leaf from his tablet, and wrote the three or four lines following, which he handed to the same usher, whom he had requested not to be far away :

I will return to the mistress of the apartments we wish to hire, and report the conditions under which you consent to take and repair the house.

Let me know — at my home in the Rue Saint Honoré, near the Church of the Assumption, and opposite the shop of a joiner named Duplay — the result of the Session, as soon as it is over.

Always thirsty for excitement and for public affairs, hoping to beat down her heart's passion with political

¹ These notes, found among Mirabeau's papers after his death, have been since collected in the work published by Bacourt; and they throw much light on the last two years of Mirabeau's life.

intrigue, the Queen awaited Gilbert's return with impatience, meanwhile listening to Weber's recital of his last intelligence, — a description of the terrible end of an awful scene, of which Weber had now witnessed both the commencement and termination.

Sent back for further information by the Queen, Weber arrived at one end of Notre Dame Bridge, just as there appeared, at the other end of the bridge, a bloodthirsty escort, bearing aloft the head of the baker François, like a murderous banner. In accordance with the same popular and ghastly humor which had led the mob to barber the heads of the Guardsmen at Sevres Bridge, one of these assassins, more facetious than the others, had decorated the head of François with a cotton cap, taken from one of his fellow-bakers.

About a third of the way across the bridge a young woman, pale and frightened, was running (despite her evidently maternal condition) as rapidly as possible towards the Hôtel de Ville.

Suddenly she stopped. That head, whose features she could not yet distinguish, looked in the distance like some antique carving; but as the head drew nearer and nearer, it was easy to see, by the distortion of the features of the poor fellow, that his head was by no means transformed into stone.

When this horrible trophy was only twenty paces off, the young woman uttered a cry, extended her arms desperately, and then, as if her feet were detached from the earth, she fell fainting on the bridge.

It was the wife of François, five months advanced towards motherhood; and they carried her away in an insensible condition.

"Oh my God," whispered the Queen, "this is a terrible warning which thou hast sent thy servant, to teach

her that there is far greater misery than her own, however great that may be."

At this moment Gilbert entered, introduced by Madame Campan, who replaced Weber as guardian at the royal door.

Gilbert found there no longer the Queen alone, but the *woman*, — that is, the wife and mother, — crushed by the recital which knocked doubly at her heart.

Her disposition could not be more favorable, — in Gilbert's mind, at least, — since he came to propose a method of putting an end to just such crimes.

Drying her eyes, whence tears were rolling, and her forehead, pearly with perspiration, the Queen took from Gilbert's hands the list he brought; but before casting her eyes on the paper, important as it was, she said: "Weber, if that poor woman is not dead, I will receive her to-morrow; and if she is really in such a sad condition, I will be godmother to her babe."

"Oh Madame, Madame," cried Gilbert, "why cannot every Frenchman see, as I see, the tears which well from your eyes, and hear the words which drop from your lips?"

The Queen trembled. These were almost the very words Charny had addressed to her, under circumstances not less critical.

Then she cast her eye over Mirabeau's note; but she was too much disturbed to make a proper response at that moment.

"This is all right, Doctor," she said. "Leave me that list! I will reflect upon it, and give you an answer to-morrow."

Scarcely knowing what she was doing, she extended her hand to Gilbert, which he, greatly surprised, brushed with his lips and finger-tips.

It must occur to any one that a great change had already come over proud Marie Antoinette, when she was willing to offer her hand for Doctor Gilbert's salute, and discuss the formation of a new cabinet, with Lafayette and Mirabeau as its prime factors.

At seven in the evening a servant, without livery, brought Gilbert the following letter.

The session has been hot.

Martial law is decided upon.

Buzot and Robespierre advocated the creation of a higher court of law.

I persuaded the house to decree that crimes against the Nation (*lèse-nation*, — it is a new word which we have invented) shall be tried by the Royal Tribunal at the Châtelet.

I unmistakably based the welfare of France on the stability of the royal authority, and three-quarters of the Assembly applauded my words.

We are now at the Twenty-first of October. I hope Royalty has made some progress since the Sixth.

Vale et me ama.

This billet was not signed; but it was in the same writing as the ministerial memorandum and the morning's note. This rendered it absolutely certain that the writer was Mirabeau.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE COURT OF THE CHÂTELET.

IN order that they may comprehend the import of Mirabeau's triumph, — which involved in its rebound the triumph of royalty, of which he constituted himself the representative, — it is necessary to tell our readers what the Court of the Châtelet was.

Moreover, one of its decisions furnished material for one of the most dreadful scenes which ever stained the Place de Grève during the year 1790, — a scene which will necessarily find its place in the course of this narrative, as it is by no means foreign to our subject.

Since the Thirteenth Century the Châtelet had been of great historic importance, both as a courthouse and a prison, having received from good King Louis the Ninth the universal jurisdiction which it exercised during five centuries.

Another King, who was nothing unless a builder, Philip Augustus, erected a considerable part of the Church of Notre Dame. He also founded three hospitals, Trinity, Saint Catherine, and Saint Nicholas du Louvre. He paved the streets of Paris, which were so buried in mud and filth, — so say the chronicles of the time, — that the odors made it impossible for the inhabitants to sit in their windows.

Philip Augustus had one great resource for all his expenses, — a resource which his successors unfortunately lost, — the Jews.

In 1189 he was inoculated with the chief folly of his age, — the desire to recapture Jerusalem from the Sultans of Asia; so he accompanied Richard the Lion-Hearted, of England, to the Holy Land.

Before he went away, not wishing that his loyal citizens of Paris should lose their time, and possibly, in their leisure moments, dream of rebellion against himself, — as, at Philip's own instigation, the subjects, and even the son of Henry Second of England had rebelled, — Philip left a plan which he ordered to be put into execution immediately after his departure.

This plan was to build a new wall about the city, an enclosure of which he himself drew the plan, and which was to be composed of solid masonry, a genuine wall of the Twelfth Century, garnished with towers and gates. This was the third wall surrounding Paris.

As one may easily understand, the engineers in charge of the undertaking did not know precisely how to gauge the size of their capital, which had grown very rapidly since the days of Hugh Capet, and was in a fair way to break through a third wall, as it had overrun the two predecessors.

The encircling wall was therefore built with a large margin; and within its circumference, as a precaution against the future, was a crowd of little hamlets, destined some day to become portions of the grand whole. These villages, poor as they were, had each its Seigneurial (or Lord) Justice. These noble judges, or seigneurs, contradicted each other on most points. Being included within one precinct, this opposition was the more noticeable; and they ended off by jostling against each other so emphatically, that their decisions led to dire confusion in this mixed capital.

There was a certain Seigneur de Vincennes. Having,

as it seemed to him, greater grievances on the score of this confusion than anybody else, he resolved to make an end of it. This Seigneur was Louis the Ninth, also King of France.

It may be well to inform little children, and even grown folks, that when Louis Ninth administered justice, under the famous oak-tree which has since become proverbial, he did so as a Seigneur, or Lord, and not as King. He therefore ordained, as King, that all the cases tried before the petty Lords Judiciary of the hamlets might be appealed to his own court, the Châtelet, in Paris. The jurisdiction of the Châtelet (or *Little Castle*) therefore became all powerful, being made a Court of Final Appeal, or Last Resort.

The Court of Châtelet therefore remained the supreme court, up to the very time when the Parliaments (encroaching, in their turn, on the royal prerogatives) declared that they would themselves consider any appeals from the decisions of the Judges of the Châtelet Court.

Now the Assembly had just suspended the Parliaments. "We buried them very speedily," said Lameth, as he left the hall after the session. In place of Parliaments, the Assembly, under the insistence of Mirabeau, restored to the Châtelet Court its ancient authority, augmented by new powers.

It was a great victory for royalty, that crimes against the nation, appealable under martial law, should come before a Crown Tribunal.

The first crime whereof the Châtelet had to take cognizance, after this change, was one which we are about to describe.

On the very day when this new law was promulgated, two of the murderers of the unfortunate François were hanged in the Place de Grève with no process of trial

except a public accusation and the general notoriety of the offence.

A third, who was none other than that blockhead Fleur d'Épine, to whom we before referred, was regularly tried. Degraded from his military office, and condemned by the Châtelet Court, he travelled by the same route as themselves, to rejoin his companions in eternity.

Two cases remained to be heard : that of the Farmer General Augeard, and that of the Inspector General of the Swiss Guards, Pierre Victor de Besenval. These two men were devoted to the Crown, and so their friends hastened to carry their cause before the higher Châtelet Judges.

Augeard was accused of having furnished the funds paid by the Queen's agent to the troops assembled on the parade-ground Champ de Mars, in July. Being little known, his arrest made little noise, and the populace cared nothing about it. The Châtelet acquitted him, without occasioning much talk.

The last case was Besenval's. This was quite another affair, for his name was notorious, in the worst sense of that term.

It was he who commanded the Swiss mercenaries at Reveillon, at the Bastille, and on the Champ de Mars. The populace remembered that he had led the assault against them on these three occasions, and were not slow to seek their revenge.

The orders of the Crown to the Châtelet Judges were most precise. Under no pretext would the King or Queen allow Besenval to be condemned ; and it required no less than this double protection to save him.

Knowing himself to be culpable, he fled after the fall of the Bastille. Arrested on his way to the frontier, he was brought back to Paris. When he entered the Court-

room, death-shouts greeted him on all sides. "Besenval to the lamp-post ! Besenval to the gibbet !" were cries heard from every quarter.

"Silence !" bawled the officials. With great effort silence was obtained. One of the onlookers profited by this stillness to call out, in a magnificent bass voice : "I demand that he be cut into thirteen pieces, and that one be sent to each section."

In spite of the charges against him, in spite of the animosity of the audience, Besenval was acquitted.

Indignant at this double acquittal, of both Augeard and Besenval, one of the auditors scribbled these four lines on a scrap of paper, which he rolled up like a ball, and sent to the Presiding Judge.

Sham judges, you — who Augeard cleared,
And Besenval whitewash — would fain cleanse a pest ;
Like cheap waste-paper, soft, besmeared,
You soak up foul blots, but on you the blots rest.

The quatrain was signed. This was not all. The Presiding Judge looked about for the author. The author was standing on a bench, soliciting, by his gestures, the Judge's attention ; but the countenance of the Judge fell, and he did not dare order the man's arrest ; for that author was Camille Desmoulins, the agitator from the Palace Royal, the hero of platform and pistol, the disseminator of savage pamphlets, the Lamp-post Advocate, as he was called.

One of the spectators who passed out in the crowd, and whose costume would cause him to be taken for a simple tradesman, spoke to one of his neighbors, at the same time laying his hand on the man's shoulder, although the latter apparently belonged to the superior class of

society. "Well, Doctor Gilbert, what do you think of those two acquittals?"

The man thus addressed started, looked at his interlocutor, recognizing the face as he had the voice, and answered: "It is *to* you and not *from* you this question should come, my master, — you who know all things, past, present, and future."

"I? Why, I think that when two such scamps are acquitted, it is time to say, 'Woe to the innocent man who will come next!'"

"And why do you think an innocent man will succeed them, and be punished?" asked Gilbert.

"For the simple reason," replied his interlocutor, with the irony natural to him, "that it is the way of the world to let the good suffer for the bad."

"Adieu, master!" said Gilbert, offering a hand to Cagliostro; for after such words he no longer doubted in the least the identity of the terrible skeptic.

"And why Adieu?"

"Because I have business," replied Gilbert, smiling.

"A rendezvous?"

"Yes!"

"With whom, — Mirabeau, Lafayette, or the Queen?"

Gilbert paused and looked at Cagliostro uneasily.

"Do you know you terrify me?" said Gilbert.

"On the contrary, I ought to reassure you," said Cagliostro.

"How so?"

"Am I not one of your friends?"

"I hope so."

"You may be sure of it, and if you want a proof —"

"What then?"

"Come with me, and I will give you, in regard to the negotiation which you believe so secret, certain other

details, kept so very private, that you, who fancy yourself to be managing this special affair, are really kept in ignorance of half its ins and outs."

"Hear!" said Gilbert. "Perhaps you think to make game of me, with the aid of some of those old enchantments which are your familiars; but never mind! The circumstances of the time are so grave that I would accept any light, though offered by Satan in person. I will go wherever you may wish to take me."

"Oh, be easy! It will not be far away, and is moreover in a place not unknown to you. Only you must let me call the first empty cab that passes. The dress in which I came out did not make it advisable to take my own team."

He made a sign to a cab which was going by on the other side of the quay. The cab drove up and the two entered it.

"Where shall we go, my friend?" asked the coachman of Cagliostro, as if he comprehended that the passenger he questioned, though more simply clad, really led the other wherever he pleased.

"Oh, thou knowest," said Balsamo, making a sort of Masonic sign to the driver, who looked at him in great astonishment.

"Pardon, Monseigneur!" he said, answering with another sign, "but I did not know you."

"It is not so with me," said Cagliostro, in a firm and haughty voice. "However numerous they may be, I know every one of my subjects, from the least to the greatest."

The coachman shut the door, mounted his seat, put his horses into a grand gallop, and drove through the labyrinth of streets which led from the Châtelet to the Boulevard called Daughters of Calvary, whence he

continued his course towards the Bastille, and drew up at the corner of the Rue Saint Claude

When the cab stopped the door was opened with a celerity which testified the driver's respectful zeal.

Cagliostro made a sign for Gilbert to step out first, and then came out himself, saying as he did so : "Hast thou nothing to say to me?"

"Yes, Monseigneur, and I should have made my report this evening, but for the good luck of meeting you now."

"Speak out!"

"What I have to say to Monseigneur must not be heard by ears profane."

"Oh," said Cagliostro, laughing, "he who listens is hardly one of the profane."

This referred to Gilbert, who discreetly moved farther away, though not so far that he could not still see with one eye and hear with one ear.

He could see a smile play over Balsamo's face at the driver's report. He could hear the two names of Provence and Favras.

When the report was finished Cagliostro drew a double louis from his pocket, and wished to give it to the coachman; but the latter shook his head. "Monseigneur knows very well," he said, "that we are forbidden, by the supreme edict, to take pay for our reports."

"Oh well, it is not for thy report I pay, but for our drive."

"With that understanding, I accept," said coachy, taking the goldpiece. "Thanks to you, Monseigneur, my day's work is over." Mounting to his seat he drove away on the trot, cracking his whip, and leaving Gilbert dumfounded by what he had just seen and heard.

"Well!" said Cagliostro, who held his door open for

several seconds before Gilbert thought of going inside, "won't you come in, my dear Doctor?"

"Certainly!" said Gilbert. "Pray excuse me;" and then he crossed the threshold, though so stunned that he almost reeled like a man intoxicated.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

AGAIN THE HOUSE IN THE RUE SAINT CLAUDE.

WE know what self-control Gilbert possessed. By the time he had crossed the large and solitary courtyard he was himself again ; so that he ascended the outer staircase with a stride as firm as his step across the threshold had been vacillating.

The mansion he had already recognized as being the same he had once visited, at that epoch in his career which had left ineffaceable traces in his heart.

In the antechamber he encountered the same German servant he had seen there sixteen years before. He stood on the same spot and was clad in the same livery ; only, like Gilbert, like the Count, like the antechamber itself, this lackey was older by sixteen years.

Fritz — he remembered this as the name of this worthy domestic — Fritz knew at a glance whither his master wished to conduct Gilbert. Opening rapidly two intervening doors he paused on the threshold of the third, till he was assured that Cagliostro had no other commands.

This third door opened into the salon. Cagliostro, with his hand, made a sign for Gilbert to enter, and with his head, a sign that Fritz might retire, adding in German : " I am at home to nobody, until further orders."

Then turning to Gilbert he said : " It was not to prevent you from understanding that I spoke to my servant in German, for I know you speak that language, but because Fritz, who is a Tyrolean, understands German much

better than French. — But sit down, Doctor ; I am at your service.”

Gilbert could not help glancing inquisitively about him, and for a few seconds his eyes rested successively on the pictures and different pieces of furniture ornamenting the room, every one of which he recalled to memory.

The salon was the same as aforetime. On the walls hung eight pictures by the Old Masters. The armchairs were still upholstered in cherry brocade, brodered with gold, whose flowers shone out in relief amid the shadows cast by the thick curtains. The great inlaid table was in its old place ; and the smaller tables, weighted with Sevres porcelain, stood between the windows.

Gilbert sighed, and let his head fall on his hand. Memories of the past superseded the feeling of curiosity which at first possessed him.

Cagliostro looked at Gilbert, as Mephistopheles might have looked at Faust, when that German philosopher had the imprudence to allow himself to indulge in such dreams in the diabolical presence. Suddenly he exclaimed, in a strident voice : “It appears that you recognize this room, Doctor?”

“Yes ; and it recalls my obligations to you.”

“Ah, bah ! Chimeras !”

“You are indeed an odd man,” said Gilbert, speaking to himself rather than to Cagliostro ; “and if overruling Reason encouraged human faith in the magical prodigies reported to us by the poets and chroniclers of the Middle Ages, I should be tempted to believe you a necromancer, like Merlin, or an alchemist, like Nicholas Flamel.”

“Yes, Gilbert, I am such a man to the world, but not to you. I have never sought to dazzle you with mira-

cles ; and if perchance you have seen, at my summons, Truth emerge from her well, a little more ornamented and a little less naked than is her custom, it is because I have a taste for frippery, true Sicilian as I am."

"It was here, Count, as you will remember, that you gave a hundred thousand crowns to a very unhappy fellow in rags, as readily as I should give a sou to a pauper."

"You forget something still more extraordinary, Gilbert," said Cagliostro gravely, — "that the ragged boy brought back the whole of the one hundred thousand crowns, less only two louis, which he had used to buy clothing with."

"The fellow was only honest, whereas you had been magnificent !"

"And who says, Gilbert, that it is not easier to be generous than honest, — and to give away a hundred thousand ready crowns to somebody, when one has millions, than to carry back the one hundred thousand crowns to the lender, especially when the borrower has n't a sou."

"Perhaps so !"

"Besides, all depends upon one's mental disposition at the moment. I had just then experienced the greatest unhappiness of my lifetime, Gilbert. I no longer held to anything ; and if you had asked for my life, I believe I should have given it to you — God pardon me ! — as readily as I gave you that hundred thousand crowns."

"Then you have been submitted to torture, like other men ?" said Gilbert, regarding Cagliostro with some astonishment.

Cagliostro sighed. "You talk of the memories recalled to your mind by this salon. If I should talk of what the room recalls to me, — but no ! Before the recital was

ended, the rest of my hair would be white. — Let us chat about something else. Let us leave former events to sleep quietly in their shroud of oblivion, in their tomb of the past. Let us talk of the present. Let us talk of the future, if you will.”

“You bring me back to present realities. Just now you said that, so far as I was concerned, you had broken with charlatanism ; and behold now you pronounce that sounding word *future*, as if the future were in your hands, — as if your eyes could decipher its unknown hieroglyphics.”

“Ah, you forget ! Having at my disposal more means than other men, it is not surprising that I see the way better and farther than others do.”

“Always words, Count !”

“You are oblivious to the facts, Doctor !”

“What do you expect, when my reason refuses to believe ?”

“You remember that philosopher who denied all motion ?”

“Yes.”

“What did his adversary do ?”

“He walked about in his opponent’s presence,” said Gilbert. — “Very well ! I see your point. March, and I will look on ; or rather, Speak, for thy servant heareth.”

“Certainly, that is why we are here ; and we have already wasted too much time on other matters. Let us see, Doctor, how far have we got along with our *fusion cabinet* ?”

“What, — our *fusion cabinet* ?”

“Certainly, our Lafayette-Mirabeau ministry.”

“There are some groundless rumors which you have heard from others, and you seek to ascertain their reality by interrogating me,” replied Gilbert.

"Doctor, you are scepticism incarnate ; and what is worse, you doubt, not because you *can't* believe, but because you *won't* believe. Well, must I first tell you some things which you know as well as I? So be it! Afterwards I will tell you some things which I know better than yourself."

"I am listening !"

"A fortnight ago you talked with the King about Mirabeau, as the one man who could save the monarchy. Perhaps you remember, as you went away from the King, that Monsieur de Favras was admitted?"

"Which proves that he was not hanged at that date," said Gilbert, smiling.

"Oh, you're in too much of a hurry, Doctor. I did n't know you were so cruel. Do give the poor devil a few days longer. I made that prediction on the Sixth of October. It is now the Seventh of November, only a month. You hardly vouchsafe his soul as long a time to flit from the body, as is always accorded to a tenant who is to vacate his lodgings,—the quarter's notice.— But I warn you, Doctor, that you are leading me off the track."

"Resume it, Count. I ask nothing better than to follow your lead."

"Very well,—you spoke to the King about Mirabeau, as the only man to rescue the monarchy."

"That is my opinion, and that is why I suggested this combination to the King."

"It is also my opinion, Doctor. That's why your combination will be wrecked."

"Wrecked?"

"Undoubtedly. You know well enough that I don't wish to see monarchies saved."

"Go on !"

"The King, somewhat unsettled by what you said to him — Excuse me, but I am obliged to take up the thread from the outset, to convince you that I am not ignorant of a single phase of your negotiation! — Very well, the King, moved by what you said to him, talked over your combination with the Queen. It will be a great amazement to superficial minds, — when that great gossip, History, shouts on the housetops what we now whisper in the ear, — to know that the Queen was less averse to your project than the King. She sent for you to inquire about it. She discussed with you the *pros* and *cons*, and finally authorized you to talk with Mirabeau. Is n't this correct, Doctor?" said Cagliostro, looking Gilbert squarely in the face.

"So far I acknowledge that you have not deviated from the correct road."

"Upon this success you came away enchanted, Monsieur Proud fellow, with the profound conviction that this royal conversion was due to your irrefragable logic and irresistible arguments."

At this ironical speech Gilbert could not avoid biting his lips.

"And to what was this conversion due, if not to my logical arguments? Tell me, Count! for the study of the human heart is more precious to me than the study of the human body. You have discovered an instrument wherewith you may read the bosoms of kings. Lend me that marvellous telescope! Only an enemy of humanity would keep it solely to himself."

"I have already told you, that from yourself I have no secrets, Doctor. According to your wish I will place the telescope in your own hands. You may look through it as you will, by the small end, which makes things look larger, or by the large end, which makes them

look smaller. The Queen yielded for two reasons. Firstly, she had been subjected to a great sorrow the evening before ; and to give her an intrigue, to tie and untie, was to furnish her with a distraction. Secondly, the Queen has always heard Mirabeau referred to as a lion, as a tiger, a bear ; and what woman is able to resist such a flattering tribute to her self-love, as to tame a bear, tiger, or lion ? ‘It will be curious,’ so she said to herself, ‘if I can bend to my feet this man who hates me, — if I can lead him to make me public apologies, in the very tribune where he insulted me. I shall see him at my knees. That will be my revenge ! If this genuflexion results in some good to France and royalty, so much the better.’ But this last consideration was entirely secondary with the Queen, you understand.”

“You pelt me with hypotheses, Count, when you promised to convince me by facts.”

“You refuse my telescope ? Well, let’s talk no more about that, but return to material things, — to such facts as may be seen with the naked eye, — Mirabeau’s debts, for example. Ah, there you have something which needs no telescope !”

“Very well, Count ; then here’s another chance for you to display your generosity.”

“By paying Mirabeau’s debts ?”

“Why not ? You once paid the debts of Cardinal Rohan.”

“Don’t grieve me on account of that speculation, for it was one which best succeeded.”

“And how did it repay you ?”

“In that affair of the necklace, — a very pretty affair, it seemed to me. For such a price I would even pay Mirabeau’s debts ; but just at present, as you know very well, it is not I on whom he must rely. He must

count upon the future Generalissimo, Lafayette, who will make him leap for fifty thousand miserable francs, like a dog after macaroons, and will end by not giving them to him."

"Oh Count!"

"Poor Mirabeau, indeed, when all the fools and coxcombs with whom thou art connected make thy genius pay for the follies of youth. True, all this is providential, for God must use human means. *The immoral Mirabeau!* says Provence, who is himself impotent. *Mirabeau the prodigal!* says Artois, whose brother has thrice paid his debts. Poor man of genius! Yes, thou wilt perhaps save the monarchy, but the monarchy ought not to be saved. Mirabeau is a monstrous babler, says Rivarol; a beggar, says Mably; a spendthrift, says La Poule; a scallawag, says Guillermy; an assassin, says the Abbé Maury; a dead man, says Target; dead and buried, says Duport; an orator more hissed than applauded, says Pelletier; small-pox in his very bones, says Champcenetz; fit for the galleys, says Lambesc; deserves hanging, says Marat. If Mirabeau should die to-morrow the people would give him an apotheosis, glorify him after death. All the dwarfs whom he surpassed in stature, and on whom he trod so heavily while he lived, would follow his hearse, crying: 'Woe to France, who hath lost her Tribune! Woe to royalty, which has lost its staff.'"

"Do you mean to predict the death of Mirabeau?" cried Gilbert, almost frightened.

"Frankly, Doctor, can you expect long life for a man whose blood scorches him, whose heart stifles him, whose genius devours him? Do you not see that power so gigantic as his cannot contend eternally against the current of mediocrity? The labor essential to such an undertaking is like the uphill journey of Sisyphus with his

rock. For two years past has Mirabeau been beaten backward by this word *Immorality*. Each time, after unparalleled efforts, when he believed he had pushed his stone to the very summit of the mountain, this word tumbled on him again, harder than ever. When the King had almost adopted the advice of the Queen, as to the advisability of creating Mirabeau Prime Minister, somebody came to the King to say: 'Sire, Paris is shocked at Mirabeau's immorality; France is shocked at his immorality; Europe is shocked at his immorality;' as if God casts great men in the same mould as common mortals; as if, in its enlargement, the circle which embraces the great virtues must not include great vices also. Gilbert, you, and two or three other intelligent men, are exerting yourselves to make Mirabeau Prime Minister, — to make him what that ninny Turgot has been, and that pedant Necker, that fop Calonne, and that atheist Brienne; but Mirabeau will not be minister, because he has one hundred thousand francs' worth of debt, — which would be readily paid, if he were only the son of a plain Farmer General, — and because he was once condemned to death for having carried off the wife of an old imbecile, who finally killed herself with charcoal for the sake of a handsome captain. What a tragedy, what a comedy, is human life! How I should weep over it, if I had not chosen the rôle of laughter."

"What prediction do you make for him?" asked Gilbert, who fully approved the flight of Cagliostro's wit into the region of the imagination, but was somewhat disconcerted by the conclusion finally reached.

"I tell you," repeated Cagliostro, in the tone of a prophet, who is not his own master and will permit no reply, "I tell you that Mirabeau the Genius, Mirabeau the Statesman, Mirabeau the Grand Orator, will exhaust

his life and conquer the tomb, without becoming what, of all the world, he should be, Minister. Ah, my dear Gilbert, mediocrity is, after all, a fine shelter."

"Then the King opposes him?"

"Peste! The King is careful. He must discuss the matter with the Queen, to whom he *almost* gave his word. You know the King's political science lies in that word *almost*. He is *almost* persuaded (like a certain king in the Scriptures) to be a Constitutionalist, a philosopher. He is *almost* popular; and he is *almost* done for, when he counsels with Monsieur de Provence. Go to the Assembly to-morrow, Doctor, and you shall see what you shall see."

"Can't you tell me in advance?"

"That would deprive you of the pleasure of a surprise."

"To-morrow is rather far off!"

"Then do better! It is five o'clock. In an hour the Jacobin Club will be open. These Jacobin gentlemen are night-birds, you know! Do you belong to the society?"

"No. Camille Desmoulins and Danton have persuaded me to join the Cordeliers."

"No matter! As I say, the Jacobin Club will be open in an hour. Be tranquil; it is a society so well made up that you will not be out of place. — We will dine together. After dinner we will take a cab and drive to the Rue Saint Honoré; and when you come out of the old convent you will have been edified. Besides, having a dozen hours' notice, you may be able to parry the catastrophe, perhaps."

"How! You dine at five?"

"At five precisely. I keep ahead in all things. In ten years from now France will have only two daily

meals, — breakfast at ten in the forenoon, and dinner at six in the evening."

"And what will lead to this change of custom?"

"Famine, my dear!"

"You are indeed a prophet of evil!"

"Not always, for I now predict a good dinner."

"Have you guests?"

"I am absolutely alone; but you know the saying of the ancient epicure, *Lucullus* dines with *Lucullus*."

"Monseigneur is served," said a lackey, opening the two leaves of a door into a dining-room, splendidly lighted and sumptuously garnished.

"Come, Monsieur Pythagorean," said Cagliostro, taking Gilbert's arm. "Bah, once does not establish a custom."

Gilbert followed the enchanter, subjugated by his magic words, and perhaps also with the hope of starting some lightning in the conversation, which would guide him in the political night wherein he was walking.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE JACOBIN CLUB.

Two hours after the conversation just recorded, a carriage, without footmen or armorial bearings, stopped in front of the steps of the Church of Saint Roch, whose façade had not then been mutilated by the long-barrelled Biscayen muskets, used on the Thirteenth Vendémiaire, in the Revolution.

From this carriage emerged two men dressed in black, like members of the commonalty at that time. Guided by the yellow glimmer of the street lamps, which here and there pierced the fog in the Rue Saint Honoré, and following the drift of the crowd, they walked along the right side of the street, as far as the small door of the Convent of the Jacobins.

If our readers have guessed, as is probable, that these two men were Doctor Gilbert and Cagliostro, or the Banker Zannone, as the latter at this time called himself, it is needless to explain why they stopped in front of this little doorway, inasmuch as that little doorway was the end of their excursion.

Moreover, as we have said, the two new-comers had only to follow the crowd, for the crowd was great.

"Will you go into the nave, the main part of the chapel, or will you content yourself with a seat in the gallery?" asked Cagliostro of Gilbert.

"I believe," replied Gilbert, "that the nave is reserved for members of the society."

"Undoubtedly ; but I belong to all sorts of societies," said Cagliostro, laughing, "and where I am, there my friends may be also. Here is a card for you, if you want it. As for me, I have only to give the word."

"We shall be recognized as outsiders," observed Gilbert, "and told to get out."

"It is necessary to tell you one thing, which it seems you do not know, — that the Jacobin Society, founded only three months ago, numbers already nearly sixty thousand members in France, and will count four hundred thousand before the year is over. Besides, my very dear fellow," he added, smiling, "this is the genuine Grand Orient of Free Masonry, — the centre of all kinds of secret societies, — rather than at that imbecile Fauchet's, as the world fancies; so if you have no right to enter here as a Jacobin, you have your place here in your capacity as a Mason of the Rosy Cross degree."

"Never mind," said Gilbert, "I like the gallery best. From that height we can overlook the whole assembly ; and if there are any present or future notabilities, with whom I am not acquainted, you can make them known to me."

"To the galleries then !" said Cagliostro, and he led the way up a wooden staircase at the right, which led to the gallery devoted to public use.

These benches were full ; but no sooner had Cagliostro made a sign, and pronounced a word in a low tone, than two men vacated their front places, as if they had anticipated the arrival of Gilbert and the banker, and were only there to keep for them these seats, which the new-comers instantly accepted.

The meeting was not yet opened. The members were scattered over the half-lighted body of the house, some chatting in groups, others promenading in the narrow

space left open to them by the great number of their colleagues ; while others, feeling isolated, were seated in the shadows or leaning against some massive pillar.

In semi-luminous strips, light from a few lamps fell upon the crowd ; but individuals could not be distinguished, unless their faces or their bodies happened accidentally to come within range of one of these feeble fountains of flame ; yet it was easy to perceive, even in the darkness, that this was an aristocratic reunion. Laced coats abounded, and the uniforms of officers, both naval and military, dotting the crowd with scintillations of gold and silver.

Indeed at this period there was not a workman, not a man of the people, — we had almost said, not a tradesman, — to republicanize this illustrious association.

For fellows of the inferior class there was another hall, below this one, which was opened at another hour, so that the aristocracy and common folks need not jostle each other.

For the instruction of the people they had established a Fraternal Society, whose members undertook to explicate the Constitution and post themselves as to the Rights of Humanity.

As for the Jacobin Society, as has been said, it was at this time a military, aristocratic, intellectual, and — above all — a literary and artistic organization ; for, indeed, artists and men of letters were in its majority.

Among literary men there were La Harpe, author of “*Mélanie* ;” Chenier, author of “*Charles the Ninth* ;” Andrieux, author of “*Giddy Heads*,” who already, at the age of thirty, gave the same promise as at sixty-six, and who “*died without the sight*,” always promising great things, but never achieving them. There was also Sedaine, the old gem-cutter, protected by the Queen, and therefore a Royalist at heart, as were most of those present. There

was Chamfort, the poet laureate, ex-secretary to the Prince de Condé, and reader to Madame Elizabeth. There was Laclos, a man attached to the interests of Orleans, the author of "Dangerous Liaisons," — a man who stood in his patron's place, and whose mission was either to call the Duke to the remembrance of his friends, or to let him be forgotten by his enemies, according to circumstances.

Among artists, there was Talma, who had just inaugurated a theatric revolution, in the Roman part of Titus. Thanks to him, the actors and people were cutting their hair, while waiting for his colleague, Collot d'Herbois, to cut off their heads. There was David, who dreamed of painting Leonidas and The Sabines, who was outlining his great canvas of The Oath in the Tennis Court, and who, perchance, had already bought the pencils with which he drew his grandest and most hideous picture, Marat Assassinated in his Bath.

There was Vernet, who had been admitted to the Academy two years before, on account of a great picture, and amused himself by painting horses and dogs. He did not suspect that four paces away from him, in that gathering, on the arm of Talma, was a young Corsican lieutenant, with smooth hair and no powder, for whom, unknown to himself, Vernet was one day to prepare five out of his six finest pictures: Napoleon Crossing the Alps, and the battles of Rivoli, Marengo, Austerlitz, and Wagram. There was Larive, the surviving representative of the declamatory school of the drama, who did not deign to recognize a rival in young Talma, but preferred Voltaire to Corneille, and Belloy to Racine. There was Laïs the singer, who was the pearl of the opera in such rôles as the Merchant, in "The Caravan," the Consul, in "Trajan," and Cinna, in "The Vestal." There were Lafayette, Lameth, Duport, Sieyès, Thouret, Chapellier,

Rabaut Saint Étienne, Lanjuinis, Montlosier. In the midst of everything, with his aggravating mien and nose in the air, was the cheeky face of Barnave, the Deputy from Grenoble, whom shallow adherents put forward as a rival of Mirabeau, but whom Mirabeau flattened out whenever he condescended to put his foot on him.

Gilbert took a long look over the brilliant gathering, recognizing almost everybody, and mentally appreciating their diverse capabilities, which did little to inspire him with hope, although the Royalist character of the assemblage comforted him somewhat.

"To sum it all up," said he suddenly to Cagliostro, "what man do you see among all these, who is really hostile to the monarchy?"

"Must I look with the eyes of the world in general, with those of Necker or Abbé Maury, with yours or with my own?"

"With yours, of course," replied Gilbert. "Is it not understood that yours are the eyes of a magician?"

"Well, there are two."

"Well, that's not many, out of four hundred."

"It is enough; for one of these men is to be the murderer and the other the kingly successor of Louis Sixteenth."

Gilbert started and murmured: "So we have here our future Brutus and our future Cæsar."

"Neither more nor less, my dear Doctor."

"You will let me see them, will you not?" said Gilbert, with a sceptical smile on his lips.

"Oh, thou apostle of the scale-covered eyes!" murmured Cagliostro. "I can do better, if thou wilt. I will let thee clasp their hands. With which shall I begin?"

"With the subverter, I think. I have respect for chronological order, so let us first see Brutus."

"Thou knowest," said Cagliostro, as if suddenly animated by a breeze of inspiration, "thou knowest that different men never proceed by the same methods, even to accomplish a kindred purpose. Our Brutus does not in any way resemble the ancient Brutus."

"All the more reason why I am curious to see him."

"Well, look there!" said Cagliostro, extending his hand in the direction of a man leaning against the old pulpit. His head was just then in the light, though the rest of his body was lost in the shadow.

His pale and livid face resembled a severed head, such as in ancient times of proscription they used to nail upon the rostrum during a speech. The eyes alone seemed to be alive, with an expression of hatred almost contemptuous, — like the expression of a viper, who knows that his tooth contains mortal venom, — as they followed the blatant and verbose Barnave in his various evolutions about the place.

Gilbert felt a shudder run throughout his body as he looked at this viperous face. "It is true, as you said beforehand, that is neither the head of a Brutus nor a Cromwell."

"No," said Cagliostro, "but perhaps it is the head of a Cassius. You know, my dear fellow, what Julius Cæsar said: 'I have no fear of gross men, who pass their days at table and their nights in dissipation; no, but I fear the dreamers, with meagre bodies and pale faces.'"

Gilbert recalled Shakespeare's lines:

Let me have men about me that are fat,
Sleek-headed men, and such as sleep o' nights.
Yond Cassius hath a lean and hungry look!
He thinks too much; such men are dangerous.
He loves no plays; he hears no music;
Seldom he smiles.

"The man whom you designate certainly fulfils the conditions prescribed by Cæsar."

"Don't you know him?" asked Cagliostro.

"Well, yes," said Gilbert, gazing at the man attentively, "I do know him, or rather I recognize him as a member of the National Assembly."

"Even so!"

"One of the most tedious orators on the left."

"Just so!"

"Whom nobody listens to when he speaks."

"Exactly."

"A petty lawyer from Arras, is he not, whom they call Maximilian de Robespierre."

"Precisely! Now look attentively at that head!"

"I am looking at it."

"What do you see?"

"I am no Lavater, Count."

"No, but you are one of his disciples."

"I see an expression of the spite felt by mediocrity towards genius."

"That is to say, you judge like all the rest of the world. It is true his voice is feeble, a little sharp perhaps. His face is sunken and sad. The skin on his forehead seems to be bound tight about his cranium, like stiff and yellow parchment. His glassy eye only emits a greenish flame, which he quickly extinguishes. His careworn physiognomy is tiresome by its very immobility; his invariable olive-green coat is odd, threadbare, and too well brushed. Yes, I understand how all these peculiarities make but small impression in our Assembly, rich in orators, which has a right to be critical, accustomed as it is to the lionlike face of Mirabeau, the self-sufficient impudence of Barnave, the cutting repartee of Abbé Maury, the fervor of Cazalès, the logic of Sieyès;

but as for this man, they cannot reproach him with immorality, as they do Mirabeau, for he is an upright man. He never forgets his principles; and if he sometimes oversteps the bounds of legality, it is that he may kill the old text with the new law, and put the letter below the spirit."

"But after all," asked Gilbert, "who is this man Robespierre?"

"Ah, art thou here, thou aristocrat of the century? It was the Earl of Strafford, who asked a similar question concerning the man who was afterwards to decapitate his Lordship, 'Who is this Cromwell? A beer-seller, isn't he?'"

"Do you mean to say that my head runs the same risk as Sir Thomas Wentworth's?" asked Gilbert, trying to emit a smile, which froze on his lips.

"Who knows?" replied Cagliostro.

"All the more reason for me to be well posted about him," said the Doctor.

"Who is Robespierre? Well, nobody in France knows him, except myself; but I always mean to know whence come the elect ones of Fate, and all about them, for this knowledge helps me to divine whither they will go. — The Robespierres are Irish by descent. Perhaps their ancestors formed part of the Irish colonists who, in the Sixteenth Century, came over to fill up the monasteries and seminaries of our northern coasts, where they received from the Jesuits that thorough education in scholastic quibbling which those Reverend Fathers always gave their pupils. The Robespierres were notaries, from father to son. One branch of the family, from which this man descends, established itself at Arras, a great centre, as you know, for both nobles and churchmen. In this old city were two lords, or rather two kings. One was the Abbé of Saint

Wast ; the other was the Bishop of Arras, whose palace shadows half the city. It was in that city that our man was born, in 1758. What he did as a boy, what he did as a youth, what he is doing to-day, I will tell you in two words. What he will do hereafter I have already told you, in one word. There were four children in the house. The head of the family lost his wife. He was an attorney at the bar of the Department of Artois ; but he fell into a melancholy mood, ceased to plead in court, and finally went on a recuperative voyage, from which he never returned. At the age of eleven the eldest child, this one, found himself the head of the family, the guardian of his brother and two sisters, — a singular duty at such an age ! The boy understood his task, and it at once made a man of him. In twenty-four hours he became what he still remains, — with a face which seldom smiles, a heart which never laughs. He was the best scholar in the school. They obtained for him, through the Abbé of Saint Wast, one of those scholarships which the Abbé had at his disposal in the College Louis le Grand. He came to Paris, recommended to a canon of Notre Dame Cathedral ; but during that year this good priest died, and, almost at the same time, the boy's youngest and best-loved sister died at Arras. The shadow of the Jesuits, who have since been expelled from France, at that period threw its gloom over the walls of Louis le Grand. You know this edifice, where your young Sebastien is now growing up. Its corridors, deep and dark as those of the Bastille, would draw the color from the freshest cheeks. Young Robespierre's cheek was already pale, and now it became livid. Other boys went out sometimes. For them the year had Sundays and holidays ; but for this orphan bursar, without a protector, all days were alike. When the others breathed the air of their families and homes, he breathed only the

atmosphere of solitude, sorrow, and weariness,— three pernicious blasts, which kindle envy and malice in the heart, and rob the soul of its bloom. This simoon withered the child, and made of him a faded young man. Some day nobody will believe that there was ever a portrait of him, at the age of twenty-four, holding a rose in one hand, and pressing the other to his breast, with this motto : *All for my sweetheart !*”

Gilbert smiled sadly, as he continued to gaze upon Robespierre.

“ It is true,” resumed Cagliostro, “ that when he adopted this device, and had himself painted in this attitude, a certain young girl swore that nothing should part their destinies. He swore likewise, and was a man to keep his oath. He went away for three months, and on his return, found her married. Meanwhile the Abbé of Saint Wast remained his protector, having found for the younger brother a scholarship in College Louis le Grand, and having procured for our hero a position as Judge in the Criminal Tribunal. There came a case to be tried, an assassin to punish. Full of remorse over this discharge of duty, he let the third culprit escape with his life, although the man was proved guilty. He then resigned his office, and became an advocate, but could not earn enough for himself and the support of his little sister ; but fortunately their brother, though poorly fed at the College Louis le Grand, still had a home there. Hardly had our man put his name on the list of advocates in Artois, when the peasantry begged him to plead their cause in some suit against the Bishop of Arras. They were in the right, as Robespierre was convinced by an examination of the evidence, and so he pleaded their cause, and won the case for the peasantry ; and in the flush of his success he was elected to the National Assem-

bly. In this Assembly he found himself between the two fires of malice and contempt: malice, on the part of the clergy, towards a fellow who had dared to argue against them, — contempt, on the part of the nobility of Artois, for a pettifogger reared by charity.”

“But,” interrupted Gilbert, “what has he done up to the present time?”

“Oh my God, — almost nothing in other people’s opinions, but plenty in mine. If it did not suit my views to have him poor, I would give him a million to-morrow.”

“But, once more I ask, what has he done?”

“You remember the day when the clergy came hypocritically to the Assembly, to beg the Third Estate, kept in suspense by the royal veto, to begin their labors?”

“Yes!”

“Well, read over again the speech which he made that day, and see if there is not a career for such acrid vehemence, which was almost eloquence.”

“But since then?”

“Since then? Well, we are obliged to jump from May to October. On the fifth of that month, when Maillard, delegated by the women of Paris, came to harangue the Assembly, in behalf of his constituents, all the members sat mute and motionless in their places; but this little lawyer not only proved himself sharper but more audacious than anybody else. All the professed defenders of the people held their tongues, but he took the floor. The time before, he had spoken in the midst of a tumult; but the second time, amidst profound silence. He supported Maillard, who pleaded on account of the famine, and demanded bread.”

“Yes indeed,” said Gilbert, thoughtfully, “this becomes graver; but perhaps he will change.”

"Oh my dear Doctor, you do not understand this Incorruptible, as they now call him. Besides, who would try to bribe a little pettifogger, whom everybody laughs at? Hereafter that man—mark what I tell you!—will be the terror of the Assembly, as he is now its laughing-stock. It is understood among the noble Jacobins that Robespierre is the clown of the Assembly, who amuses them, and ought to amuse the public,—a man whom everybody can and should make game of. When the members get weary in their long meetings, they need some gawk to cheer them up. In the eyes of Lameth, Cazalès, Maury, Barnave, Duport, this Robespierre is such a jester. His associates betray him by laughing in their sleeves; his enemies hoot and laugh aloud. When he speaks, everybody chatters. When he raises his voice, everybody shouts. When he makes a speech,—always on the right side, and in defence of some principle,—a speech to which nobody listens, some insignificant member, on whom the Speaker fixes his eye, ironically demands that the address be printed. Only one of his fellow-members at all understands him,—one only! Can you guess who? Mirabeau, who yesterday said to me: 'That man will go far, because he believes what he says;'—a singular thing for Mirabeau to say, as you can well understand."

"But," said Gilbert, "I have read this man's speeches, and I have found them insipid and commonplace."

"Good gracious, I did n't tell you he was a Cicero or a Demosthenes, a Mirabeau or a Barnave! No! He is the simpleton Monsieur de Robespierre, as they affect to call him. Besides, his speeches are treated in the same style by the printers as by the Assembly. On the tribune they interrupt him. At the printing-house they mutilate him. The journalists do not even call him

Monsieur de Robespierre. The reporters do not even know his name. They call him Monsieur B., Monsieur N., or Monsieur ——. God alone, and perhaps myself, know what an amount of gall is massed in that thin breast, what tempests lodged in that narrow brain; because he has neither the distractions of society, nor the solace of family life, to make the hissed orator forget all these insults and injuries, this treachery, — against a man, moreover, who is conscious of his own ability, and feels the sting. In his gloomy apartment in the gloomy district of Marais, in a poor, cold, unfurnished lodging on the Rue Saintonge, — where he lives parsimoniously on his salary as Deputy, — he is as much alone as he was in the damp corridors of College Louis le Grand. Even up to last year his face was young and mild; but you can see that within a year his face has withered, dried up, like the heads of those Caribbean chiefs, which such men as Captain Cook and La Perouse brought from Oceanica. He never leaves the Jacobin Club; and apart from the emotions with which he suffers, unseen by others, he has suffered two or three times with hemorrhages, which left him insensible. You are a great mathematician, Gilbert, but I defy you, even with the most extended multiplications, to calculate the amount of blood which it will cost the aristocrats who insult this man, the priests who persecute him, and even the King who never heard of him, — blood which Robespierre will shed."

"But why does he come to the Jacobin meetings?"

"Ah, that's it! Hooted in the Assembly, he is heard at the Club. This Society, my dear Doctor, is an infant Minotaur. It begins with a cow, but later it may devour a nation. Well, Robespierre is a type of the Jacobins. The association is summed up in him, and he is the expression of the association, — nothing more, nothing less.

He will keep equal step with the Jacobins, going neither behind them nor ahead of them. I promised, did I not, to let you see an instrument, with which its inventor is just now busy, which has for its object the removal of one or two heads a minute? Well, of all the personages here present, the one who will give the most employment to that instrument of death is Robespierre."

"Truly, you are funereal, Count," said Gilbert; "and if your Cæsar gives me no more comfort than your Brutus, I shall be quite capable of forgetting the occasion which brought me here. Pardon me, but what has become of our Cæsar?"

"Hold, you may see him down there. He is chatting with a man with whom he is not yet acquainted, but who later will have a great influence over his destiny. That man's name is Barras. Remember the name, for you will hear it again in due time."

"I do not know if you are correct, Count," said Gilbert, "but in this case you have chosen your illustration well. Your Cæsar has the veritable forehead for a crown; and his eyes, whose expression I do not quite catch —"

"Yes, because he is looking inward. Those are eyes which read the future, Doctor."

"What is he saying to Barras?"

"He tells him that if he himself had defended the Bastille, it would not have been taken."

"Then he is not a Patriot?"

"Men like him never care to be anything, unless they can be first and foremost."

"Then you are jesting at the expense of that little sub-lieutenant?"

"Gilbert," said Cagliostro, pointing again towards Robespierre, "as sure as that man there will rebuild the scaffold of Charles the First, so surely will that other

man there," pointing to the Corsican with the smooth hair, "reconstruct the throne of Charlemagne."

"Then our struggle for liberty will be futile," said Gilbert, discouraged.

"And who says that the one will not do as much for liberty with his throne, as the other with his scaffold?"

"The lieutenant will then be a Titus, a Marcus Aurelius, a god of peace, coming to console the world in an age of bronze?"

"He will be at the same time an Alexander and a Hannibal. Born in the midst of war, he will wax great by war, and by war he will wane. I defied you to calculate the blood which it will cost the clergy and nobility of France, which Robespierre will demand. Take all the blood which is shed by these priests and nobles, enlarge it by multiplication upon multiplication, and you will not then reach the river, the lake, the sea of blood which that man will pour out, with his armies of five hundred thousand soldiers, and his battles three days long, which will demand fifty thousand cannon-shots."

"And what will come of all this noise, this smoke, this chaos?"

"The result of every Genesis! We are intrusted with the duty of burying the old world. Our children will see the birth of a brave new world. This lieutenant is the giant who will guard the door. Like Louis Fourteenth, like Leo Tenth, like Augustus, he will give his name to the century now opening."

"And what is his name?" asked Gilbert, fairly conquered by Cagliostro's positive conviction.

"He still calls himself Bonaparte," replied the prophet, "but some day he will call himself Napoleon."

Gilbert bowed his head, and fell into a revery so profound that he did not perceive, being absorbed by the

tenor of his thoughts, that the meeting was opened, and that an orator had ascended the rostrum.

An hour passed away, but neither the noise of the assemblage nor of its officers, for the meeting was a stormy one, could draw Gilbert away from his meditations, till he felt a powerful hand clasp and rest upon his shoulder.

He turned. Cagliostro had disappeared, but in his place he found Mirabeau, his face thunderous with anger. Gilbert looked at him questioningly.

"Well!" said Mirabeau.

"What is it?" asked Gilbert.

"It means that we are cajoled, mocked, betrayed. It means that the Crown will have none of me, and takes you for a dupe and me for a fool."

"I do not understand you!"

"You have not been listening, then?"

"To what?"

"The resolution which was just passed."

"Where?"

"Here!"

"What resolution?"

"You must have been asleep!"

"No," said Gilbert, "but I have been dreaming."

"Well, to-morrow, in response to my motion of to-day, which proposes that the cabinet ministers be invited to assist in the deliberations of the National Assembly, three friends of the King are going to demand that no member of the Assembly shall be a minister during its term. Therefore the ministerial combination, so carefully arranged, is broken up by the capricious whistle of his Majesty Louis the Sixteenth; but," continued Mirabeau, standing like Ajax, with his finger pointed towards the sky, "but, as surely as my name is Mirabeau, I'll pay

him back ; and if his whistle can overturn a ministry, he'll find out that mine will upset a throne ! ”

“ But,” said Gilbert, “ you will not stay away from the Assembly on this account ? You will still fight it out to the end ? ”

“ I go to the Assembly ? I fight it out ? I am one of those men who are only to be buried under the ruins.”

Half-distracted, Mirabeau went away, more grand and more terrible, for the deific frown imprinted on his face.

The next day indeed, on the motion of Lanjuinais, and in spite of the superhuman genius displayed by Mirabeau, the National Assembly adopted the obnoxious resolution by an immense majority, that no member of the Assembly should be appointed cabinet-minister during the term of the Assembly.

“ And I,” cried Mirabeau, when the decree was voted, “ I propose an amendment which will not alter your law. Here it is ! — that all the members of the present Assembly may be cabinet-ministers, except Monsieur le Comte de Mirabeau.”

Every one looked stunned by this audacity. In the midst of a universal silence Mirabeau descended from the platform, with the same proud step with which he had once marched up to Dreux Brézé, and said to him : “ We are here by the will of the people ; we will only go out with bayonets in our bellies.”

Then he left the hall. Mirabeau's defeat was like another man's triumph.

Gilbert did not even come to the Assembly. He remained at home, and reviewed the strange predictions of Cagliostro. Without believing them, he could not drive them out of his mind. The present seemed to him very small, when compared with the future.

Perhaps some one may ask how, as simply the historian

of a time already past, *temporis acti*, I can explain Cagliostro's predictions about Robespierre and Napoleon.

I ask of those who so question me, to explain the prediction of Mademoiselle Lenormand about the Empress Josephine.

At every step in the world we meet something inexplicable. It is for those who cannot explain these marvels, and yet do not wish to believe them, that scepticism has been invented.

CHAPTER XXX.

METZ AND PARIS.

As Cagliostro had declared, and as Mirabeau had surmised, it was the King who had overturned all Gilbert's projects.

In the overtures to Mirabeau, Marie Antoinette had acted with passionate spite and womanly curiosity, rather than queenly policy, and therefore she saw without regret the downfall of the scaffolding of a Constitutional Government, which had always keenly wounded her pride.

As to the King, his policy was always limited to procrastination, gaining time, and profiting by circumstances. Moreover, two negotiations were pending in opposite directions, each offering the opportunity of flight from Paris, and one looking to his residence in some well-fortified place, — his favorite plan.

Of these two negotiations, as we know, one was engineered by Favras, a gentleman in the interest of *Monsieur de Provence*. The other was in the hands of Charny, the special messenger of King Louis.

Charny made the journey from Paris to Metz in two days. He waited upon Commander Bouillé at Metz, and delivered the King's missive. This letter, it will be remembered, was only to be the means of putting Charny into communication with Bouillé; so the Commander, although not concealing his dissatisfaction with current affairs, began by maintaining great reserve towards his visitor.

In fact, the suggestions made by Charny to Bouillé interfered seriously with the plans of the Commander. The Empress Catherine had offered him a command; and he was on the point of writing to the King, asking leave to accept a Russian commission, when this letter from Louis Sixteenth made its appearance.

Bouillé's first impulse, therefore, was one of hesitation; but the name of Charny brought to remembrance the Count's relationship with Monsieur de Suffren, and the common rumor that the Queen honored Charny with her entire confidence; and as Bouillé was a faithful Royalist, he felt himself permeated with a desire to snatch the King from that factitious freedom which many regarded as real captivity.

Before coming to any understanding with Charny, however, Bouillé suggested that his authority was not sufficiently extended, and determined upon sending his son Louis de Bouillé to Paris, for a personal interview with his Majesty on this important subject.

Charny remained in Metz during their negotiations, partly because nothing personal recalled him to Paris, and partly from a somewhat exaggerated sense of honor, which made him feel it his duty to stay in Metz as a sort of hostage.

Count Louis arrived in Paris in the middle of November. At this period the King was carefully guarded from sight by Lafayette, and young Bouillé was a cousin to Lafayette.

The young man stayed at the residence of one of his friends, whose patriotic opinions were well known, but who was then travelling in England.

For Count Louis to visit the palace without the knowledge of Lafayette, was dangerous and difficult, if not impossible.

From one point of view, although Lafayette was to be kept in complete ignorance of the entanglements between Charny, Commander Bouillé, and the King, nothing seemed simpler than for the young man to procure his presentation to the King by Lafayette himself; and circumstances seemed of their own accord to favor the desires of the young officer.

He had been three days in Paris, having as yet decided upon nothing definite, but pondering by what means he could come near the King, and asking himself, as we have just said, if the surest way would not be to speak to Lafayette himself; when there came a letter from the General, informing Louis that his arrival in Paris was known, and inviting him to come to the headquarters of the National Guard, at the Noailles Mansion.

This was in a certain way the answer of Providence, from on high, to the prayer which the young man had silently sent upward. Here was a good fairy, such as we read of in the charming stories of Perrault, taking our knight by the hand, and leading him towards his destination.

He therefore at once reported himself at the staff-office. The General had gone to the Hôtel de Ville, where he was to receive a communication from Bailly; but in the absence of the General, Louis encountered his aide-de-camp, Monsieur Romeuf.

Romeuf had served in the same regiment with the young Count, and there were pleasant relations between them, albeit one belonged to the democratic and the other to the aristocratic party. Since then Romeuf had been transferred to another regiment, one of those which were mustered out of service after the Fourteenth of July; and he then resumed service in the National Guard, where he held the position of favorite aide to Lafayette.

These two young men, although wholly differing in opinion on certain subjects, agreed in this, that both loved and respected the King ; although one loved him in Patriotic fashion, — on condition that he would swear to and abide by the Constitution ; while the other loved him after the Aristocratic fashion, — on condition that he should refuse the Constitutional oath, and, if necessary, call in foreign arms, to bring the rebels to terms.

By *rebels* young Bouillé meant three-quarters of the Assembly, the National Guard, the electors, and so on, — five-sixths of all France.

Romeuf being twenty-six years old, and Count Louis twenty-two, it was rather difficult for the young fellows to long confine their conversation to politics, — especially as Louis did not wish his comrade to suspect him of being engaged in any serious scheme.

He confided to his friend Romeuf, as a great secret, that he had left Metz without formal permission, in order to visit Paris and see a woman whom he adored.

While he was imparting this confidence to the aide, Lafayette appeared on the threshold of the door, which remained open ; but although Louis could see the unexpected arrival reflected in the mirror facing them both, he nevertheless continued his narrative ; only, in spite of various signs from Romeuf, which he pretended not to understand, he raised his voice in such a way that the General could not miss a solitary word. In fact the General heard everything, which was precisely what young Louis intended.

Lafayette walked slowly towards the speaker's back ; and when the story was finished, he laid his hand on the narrator's shoulder, and said to him : " Ah ha, Monsieur Lover, that is why you keep out of the way of your respectable kinsfolk ! "

He was no severe judge, this gay General of thirty-two years, this mild-frowning mentor,—himself quite the rage among women of fashion,—and Count Louis was not greatly disturbed by the homily which awaited him.

“I have concealed myself a little, my dear cousin, until to-day, when I should have done myself the honor to call upon the most illustrious of my kindred, even if he had not forestalled my intention by this message ;” and he showed the General the letter just received.

“Do you country gentlemen suppose the Parisian police are so blind and so badly managed ?” said the General, with an air of satisfaction which proved that a certain amount of self-esteem entered into his reliance upon the police.

“We know that nothing is concealed from the brave General who watches over the liberties of the people and the safety of the King.”

Lafayette looked sidewise at his young cousin, with that air of good-nature, humorous and somewhat jocose, which we have before seen in him. He knew that the safety of the King was very important to that branch of the family, but that they did not concern themselves much about the liberties of the people.

He therefore responded to only half of the compliment. “And my cousin, the Marquis de Bouillé,” he said, emphasizing a title which he had renounced for himself since the Fourth of August, “has he not charged his son with some commission for the King whose welfare I guard ?”

“He charged me to place at his feet his homage and sentiments of respect, if General Lafayette should not judge me unworthy of a presentation to my sovereign.”

“Present you, — and when ?”

“As soon as possible, General. I believe I have had

the honor of telling you, or Romeuf, that being here without furlough —”

“You told Romeuf, but it comes to the same thing, as I heard it all. Very well, let us see, —good things ought not to be retarded. It is eleven o’clock in the forenoon. Every day, at noon, I have the honor of seeing the King and Queen. Eat a morsel with me, if you have not already breakfasted, and I will take you to the Tuileries.”

“But am I properly dressed, my dear cousin?” asked the young fellow, glancing over his uniform and his boots.

“First of all I must tell you, dear boy, that the great business of etiquette, which you imbibed with your mother’s milk, has been sick unto death since your departure from town. Besides, as I look you over, your coat is irreproachable, your boots are all right; and what costume is more appropriate than a military uniform, for a gentleman who is ready to die for his King? Romeuf, go and see if breakfast is ready. I will take my cousin to the Tuileries immediately afterwards.”

This plan corresponded so directly with the young man’s wishes that he could make no serious objection; so he bowed in token of his assent and obligation.

A half-hour afterwards the sentinels at the gates presented arms to General Lafayette and the young Count, with no suspicion that they were paying military honors at the same time to the Revolution and the Counter-Revolution.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE QUEEN.

LAFAYETTE and Louis de Bouillé ascended the smaller staircase in the Marsan Pavilion, and betook themselves to the main (or second) floor, which their Majesties occupied.

All doors opened before Lafayette. Sentinels presented arms and footmen bowed low, easily recognizing him as master of the palace, and as the King's king.

Lafayette was first admitted into the Queen's apartments. As for the King, he was at his forge, and some one was sent to inform his Majesty.

It was three years since young Bouillé had seen Marie Antoinette.

During these three years the States General had been convened, the Bastille had been captured, and the sad occurrences of the Fifth and Sixth October had intervened.

The Queen had reached the age of thirty-four, the touching and attractive age, as Michelet expresses it, which Vandyck so liked to paint, — the age of wifehood and motherhood, — and, in the case of Marie Antoinette, the queenly age.

Within those three years the Queen had suffered in mind and heart, in love and self-esteem. Her thirty-four years were written on the poor lady's cheeks in lines of purple and violet, which told their story of tear-filled eyes and sleepless nights, which testified the deep malady of the womanly heart, which is never entirely

healed, be she queen or commoner, till it is utterly extinguished.

This was the age at which Mary Stuart, even as a prisoner, inspired Douglas, Mortimer, Norfolk, and Babington with a passion so strong that they devoted themselves to death for her sake.

The sight of this Queen, imprisoned, hated, calumniated, threatened, — and the events of the Fifth October proved these menaces to be no idle threats, — made a profound impression on the heart of the chivalrous young Louis de Bouillé.

Women never err as to the effect they produce, and as kings and queens have a peculiar memory for faces, — which in a certain sense is part of their education, — Marie Antoinette hardly perceived the young man before she recognized him, and had scarcely looked into his eyes before she felt positive that this was the face of a loving friend.

The consequence was that before the General had time to make the presentation, before they even reached the foot of the lounge whereon the Queen was reclining, she raised herself, as one naturally does for an old acquaintance, whom it is pleasant to meet again, or a follower, on whose fidelity one may depend, and cried: “ Ah, Monsieur de Bouillé ! ”

Without paying any attention to Lafayette’s words, she extended her hand to the young man. Louis hesitated an instant, for he had not anticipated she would grant him such a favor ; but as the royal hand remained extended, he threw himself on his knees, and touched that hand with tremulous lips.

This was one of the Queen’s blunders, and she made many like unto it. Without this favor young Bouillé would have been equally won to her side ; and by such a

favor, accorded to his cousin in presence of Lafayette himself, — to whom she had never extended such a courtesy, — she set up a line of demarcation between them, and offended the man whom she most needed to make her friend.

With that courtesy which he was incapable of forgetting for an instant, but not without a perceptible alteration in his voice, he said : “ On my faith, dear Cousin Louis, I was expected to present you to her Majesty, but it seems to me as if *you* should the rather present *me*.”

The Queen was so rejoiced to find herself face to face with an adherent whom she could trust, — the woman was so proud of the effect she had evidently wrought upon the Count, — that she was conscious, in her heart, of the renewed glory of a youth she had believed forever vanished, and felt the spring breezes of a love which she had supposed forever dead. In this mood she turned to the General, with such a smile as she used to wear at Versailles and the Trianon, and said : “ Dear General, the Count is no such stern Republican as yourself. He comes from Metz, not from America. He does not seek Paris in order to labor over the Constitution ; he comes but to offer me his homage. Be not surprised when I accord to him — I, a poor queen, half dethroned — a courtesy which, to a simple provincial like himself, may seem worth being called a favor ; but which to *you*, inasmuch — ” and the Queen supplied the missing words with a coy expression of charming raillery, like the coquetry of a young girl, as if she would say : “ Inasmuch as you, Monsieur Scipio, you, Monsieur Cincinnatus, look down upon such frivolities — ”

“ Madame,” replied Lafayette, “ I have ever adhered respectfully and devotedly to my Queen, without her comprehending my respect or appreciating my devotion. This

may be a great misfortune for me, and perhaps also for her!" and he bowed as he spoke.

The Queen regarded him with her deep and clear eye. More than once Lafayette had spoken similar words to her. More than once she had meditated over such words, after they were spoken. Unhappily for her, when he thus uttered himself, she always felt an instinctive repulsion towards him.

"Indeed, General," she said, "you must be generous, and forgive me."

"I, Madame, forgive you? And for what?"

"My enthusiastic welcome to this good family of Bouillés, who love me with all their hearts, and between whom and myself this young man may well be the connecting thread, the electric chain. When he entered, it was his father, his uncles, all his family, who rose to my view, and kissed my hand with loyal lips."

Lafayette bowed again.

"Monsieur," continued the Queen, "after the pardon, the peace, — with a good shake of the hand, in English or American fashion."

She gave him her hand, but with the palm upwards. Lafayette clasped it slowly and coldly, saying: "I regret that you will never recollect that I am a Frenchman, Madame. It is not so very far from the Sixth of October to the Sixteenth of November."

"You are right, General," she said, making an effort to control herself, and pressing his hand; "it is I who am ungrateful!" and she sank back on her lounge as if overcome with emotion. "But this ought not to surprise you, — you, who know how often I am upbraided for ingratitude."

Presently, shaking her head, she added: "Now, General, what is there new in Paris?"

Lafayette had a chance to retaliate, and he seized his opportunity.

"Ah, Madame, how much I regret that you were not at the Assembly yesterday. You would have witnessed a touching scene, one that would have moved your heart. An old man came to thank the Assembly for the happiness he owed to it, — and to the King, inasmuch as the Assembly could not have conferred that happiness without the royal sanction."

"An old man?" repeated the Queen, inattentively.

"Yes, Madame, and such an old man, — the Dean, the Nestor, of the human race! — an emancipated peasant from Jura, one hundred and twenty years old, led to the bar by five generations of his descendants, that he might thank the Assembly for the Fourth of August decrees. Do you understand, Madame? — a man who had been a feudal appendage for a half-century under Louis Fourteenth, and eighty years afterward."

"And what did the Assembly do for this old man?"

"They rose, to a man, and he was compelled to sit down, and put on his hat in their presence."

"Ah," rejoined the Queen, in a tone peculiar to herself, "this must indeed have been very touching. I regret I was not there; but you know better than anybody else," added she, smiling, "that I am not always where I want to be."

The General made a motion which signified that he had something to say in reply; but the Queen went on, without giving him time to speak: "No, I was here, receiving the poor wife of that unfortunate baker, — the Assembly's baker, — whom the Assembly allowed to be assassinated almost at its doors. What was the Assembly doing that day, Monsieur?"

"You talk, Madame," responded the General, "of one

of those evils which have harassed the Representatives of France ; but if the Assembly could not prevent the murder, the murderers have at least been punished."

"Oh yes, but their punishment has not comforted this poor woman. She was almost crazy, and it is thought she will be brought to bed with a stillborn child. If her babe is living, I have promised to be its godmother ; and in order that the public may know that I am not insensible to such of their misfortunes as come to my knowledge, I ask you, dear General, if it will be too great an inconvenience if the baptism takes place at Notre Dame."

Lafayette lifted his hand, like one who was about to ask permission to speak, and is glad to have it granted, and said : "Madame, this is the second allusion you have made, within a few moments, to the pretended captivity in which some would have it believed that you are held by your faithful servants. I must hasten to say, before my cousin here, — and I will repeat it before Paris, before Europe, before the world, — as I wrote yesterday to Monsieur Mounier, who, from the interior of Dauphiny, laments the royal captivity, — that you are free ; and I have but one desire, I address to you but one petition, — that your Majesties will put this to the proof, the King by resuming his sports and his drives, and you by accompanying him."

The Queen smiled, as if hardly convinced.

"As to being godmother to this poor little orphan, born into so much mourning, in making this agreement with the widow, the Queen has obeyed her kind heart, which makes her loved and respected by all who are close about her. If the Queen will select the church where she wishes the ceremony to take place, and will give her

orders, when the day arrives for the ceremony, all shall be made ready according to those orders. Meanwhile," he continued, bowing, "I await any other orders where-with the Queen may deign to honor me to-day."

"For to-day, my dear General, I have only one other request, — that you invite your young cousin, if he remains a few days longer in Paris, to accompany you to one of Madame de Lamballe's receptions; for you know she receives for me as well as for herself."

"And I, Madame, will avail myself of the invitation, for both his sake and my own; and if her Majesty has not seen me there before, I pray her to be persuaded that it was because she has heretofore forgotten to manifest a wish to meet me there."

The Queen responded with an inclination of the head and a smile, which amounted to dismissal. Each of the two cousins accepted that which was meant for him, — Lafayette the salutation, Count Louis the smile; and then withdrew backwards, the one bearing away more bitterness in his heart, and the other more devotion.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE KING.

At the entrance of the Queen's apartments the two visitors found the King's valet, François Hue, awaiting them.

The King had sent word, that having begun, for his recreation, a very important piece of lock-work, he begged General Lafayette to come upstairs to the shop.

A forge was the first thing the King inquired about on his arrival at the Tuileries. Learning that this indispensable appendage had been forgotten in the building plans of Catherine de Medicis and Philibert de Lorme, he selected a large attic, — just above his own bedchamber, — with a staircase both from the inside and outside, and there established his workshop for lockmaking. Louis Sixteenth had not for an instant forgotten this workshop, even amidst the grave questions which had assailed him during the five weeks he had been at the Tuileries. With him the forge was a fixed idea. He had presided over its arrangements, and had himself designated the proper places for the bellows, the fire, the anvil, the bench, and the vises. At last the forge had been completed, the evening before. All sorts of implements were provided. Round files, bastard files, toothed files, fish-tongue and donkey files, were all in their places. One-sided hammers, cross hammers, pointed hammers, hung from their rightful nails. Tongs, pincers, rabbets, and holding irons were within reach of the workman's hands.

Louis Sixteenth could wait no longer, and ever since morning he had been hard at this work, which was such a relief to his mind, a work in which he might have been a past master, as we have already learned from Master Gamain, if, to that worthy man's great regret, such idle fellows as Turgot, Calonne, and Necker had not distracted him from that learned occupation, by talking, not only about the affairs of France, — which Gamain's rigor might have allowed, — but also about other matters, which appeared to him very useless, relating to Brabant, Austria, England, America, and Spain.

All this explains why the King, in the renewed ardor of his work, had begged Lafayette to come upstairs to the shop, instead of himself coming down to greet the General.

Moreover, having allowed the Commander of the National Guard to see his feebleness as a king, he was not unwilling to let him see his majesty as a locksmith.

In order to conduct the visitors to the Royal Forge, the valet did not think proper to take them through the King's suite of rooms, and up by the private staircase, so they circumnavigated the royal apartments by way of the corridors, and ascended the public staircase, which made the distance somewhat longer.

The result of this deviation from the direct line was, that young Count Louis had more time for reflection; and he reflected accordingly.

Though his heart was filled with the Queen's gracious reception of him, he could not misconceive the fact that she had not expected him. Not an ambiguous word, not a covert gesture had given him to understand that the august prisoner, as she styled herself, had any conception of the mission with which he was charged, or counted the least in the world on him, to free her from her thralldom;

and this agreed with what he had gleaned from Charny, as to the King's concealment of their scheme from everybody, even from the Queen.

Whatever satisfaction it gave Count Louis to see the Queen once more, it was evident that he could not look to her for the solution of his problem.

He must therefore observe carefully if, in the King's reception of him, in even a word or motion, he could detect any hint, meant solely for himself, that the King was better informed than Lafayette, as to the cause of young Louis's trip to Paris.

Not being acquainted with Count Louis, the valet turned when they reached the door of the shop, and inquired: "Whom shall I announce?"

"Announce the General in Chief of the National Guard. I will myself have the honor of presenting the other gentlemen to his Majesty."

So the valet announced: "Monsieur the Commander of the National Guard!"

The King turned towards them, and said: "Ah, is it you, Monsieur Lafayette? I ask pardon for making you come all the way up here, but the locksmith assures you of a hearty welcome to his shop. A fellow once said to Henry Fourth, that even a charcoal-burner was master in his own house; so I say to you, you are as much the master here, in the blacksmith's shop, as in the King's regular apartments."

King Louis, as we may readily see, attacked the conversation very much in the same fashion as Marie Antoinette.

"Sire," responded Lafayette, "under whatsoever circumstances I may have the honor of presenting myself before the King, and on whatever floor or in whatever dress he may receive me, the King will be always King,

and the man who now offers his respectful homage will always be the King's faithful subject and devoted servant."

"I do not doubt it, Marquis! But you are not alone. Have you changed your aide-de-camp? Does this young officer take the place of either Gouvion or Romeuf?"

"This young officer, Sire, — and I ask the privilege of presenting him to your Majesty, — is my cousin, Louis de Bouillé, a captain in *Monsieur's* Dragoons."

"Oh yes!" said the King, with a slight start, which the young gentleman remarked, "oh yes, a son of the Marquis de Bouillé, Commander at Metz."

"The same, Sire," said the young Count with alacrity.

"Ah Monsieur, excuse me for failing to recognize you, but I am very near-sighted. — You have been some time away from Metz?"

"Only five days, Sire; but being in Paris without a regular furlough, though by the special permission of my father, I have solicited of my kinsman, the General, the honor of a presentation to your Majesty."

"You have done well to ask it of Lafayette, my dear young Count, for nobody is better able to present you, at all times, and through no one could the presentation be more agreeable."

The three words, *at all times*, indicated that Lafayette had kept up the privilege accorded to him at Versailles, of attending both general and special, both private and public receptions, — in fact, of seeing the King whenever it seemed best.

Moreover, the few words spoken by the King were sufficient to indicate to the young Count that he must be strictly on his guard. In particular the question, "Is it long since you left Metz?" meant, "Did you come away from Metz after Charny's arrival?"

The response of the young messenger sufficed for the King to understand his meaning. The statement, "I left Metz five days ago, and I am in Paris without military leave, though by my father's permission," signified : "Yes, Sire, I saw Monsieur de Charny ; and my father has sent me to Paris to hear more from your Majesty, and learn certainly if Charny was acting in behalf of the King."

Lafayette glanced curiously about. Many were admitted into the King's business office, his council-chamber, his library, — even into his oratory, or private chapel ; but few received the special favor of admission into his workshop, where the King was the apprentice, and where the true king, the veritable master, was Monsieur Gamain.

The General noticed the perfect order in which everything was arranged ; but this was not really remarkable, as only on that morning had the King been able to begin work, Hue having acted as his apprentice, to pull the bellows.

Lafayette was embarrassed as to what subject he should take up, with a monarch who received him in such an off-hand fashion, with sleeves tucked up, a file in his hand, and a leathern apron in front of him ; but at last he said : "Your Majesty is busy with an important piece of work ?"

"Yes, General, I have undertaken the locksmith's greatest mechanism, a lock ! I tell you what I am doing, so that if Marat should find out that I have again set up my workshop, and should pretend that I am forging fetters for France, you can assure him, if you clap your hands on him, that such a report is untrue. — You are neither a journeyman nor a master workman, I suppose, Monsieur de Bouillé ?"

"No, Sire ; but I am an apprentice, and if I could be of any use to your Majesty —"

"That's true, my dear cousin," said Lafayette ; "the husband of your nurse was a locksmith, was n't he ? I remember that your father once told me, although he had no great admiration for the author of 'Émile,' that he should have trained you as a locksmith, had he followed the advice of Jean Jacques Rousseau in your behalf."

"Precisely, Monsieur, and that is why I said to his Majesty, that if he needed an apprentice —"

"An apprentice would not be unserviceable to me, Monsieur," said the King ; "but what I most need is a master."

"What sort of a lock is your Majesty making," asked the young man, with that half-familiarity authorized by the situation and attire of the King. "Is it a night-latch, a clover-leaf, a spring-lock, a bolt-lock, or a catch-lock ?"

"Oh my cousin," said Lafayette, "I don't know what you can do about locks practically ; but as a theorist you seem thoroughly posted about the — I will not call it a *trade*, since my sovereign has ennobled it — about the *art*."

The King had listened with evident pleasure to the nomenclature of locks given by the young fellow, and now replied : "No, it is only a concealed or mortised lock, opening on both sides ; but I fear I have presumed too much on my own ability. Ah, if my poor Gamain were only here, — he who calls himself Master of masters, Master over all !"

"Is the good man dead, Sire ?" asked young Louis.

"No," replied the King, — with a passing wink at the young man, as much as to say, *Read between the lines !* — "no, he lives at Versailles, Rue Reservoir. The dear fellow has n't dared to come and see me at the Tuileries."

"Why not, Sire?" asked Lafayette.

"For fear of compromising himself. A king of France is a very compromising sort of chap just now, my dear General, and the proof of it is, that all my friends are gone, some to London, others to Coblenz and Turin. However, my dear General, if you see nothing improper in Gamain's coming here some day, with one of his prentice-boys, to give me a little start, I will send for him."

"Sire," quickly answered Lafayette, "his Majesty knows very well that he is at perfect liberty to summon whom he will and see whomsoever he pleases."

"Yes, on condition that your sentinels cross-question visitors, as if they were smugglers on the frontier. My poor Gamain would think himself ruined entirely, if they should mistake his files for poniards, and his kit for a cartridge-box."

"Sire, I know not how to excuse myself to your Majesty; but I am responsible to Paris, to France, to Europe, for my sovereign's precious life, and I cannot take too many precautions for his safety. As to the smart fellow of whom we were talking, the King may give what orders seem to him best."

"That's all right! Thanks, Monsieur Lafayette; but there is no hurry. In six or eight days I may want him," he added, with a side glance at Bouillé; "both him and his apprentice. I will send him word by my valet Durey, who is one of Gamain's friends."

"And he will only need to present himself, Sire, to be admitted. His name will be a sufficient passport. God shield me, Sire, from this reputation of being a jailer, a turnkey, a gatekeeper. Never was the King of France freer than at this moment. Indeed, I came with the idea of begging his Majesty to resume his outdoor sports, his hunting parties, his long rambles."

"As to the chase, — no, I thank you! Besides, just now I have other things to do. As to driving, wandering, that's another matter. My last trip from Versailles to Paris has rather cured me of any passion for travel, — at least, with such a great company of believers."

Here the King again glanced at the young nobleman, who, by a slight elevation of the eyelids, showed that he understood what the King had in mind.

"Meanwhile, Monsieur," added Louis Sixteenth, addressing himself directly to the young man, "shall you soon leave Paris, and return to your father?"

"Sire," he answered, "I shall leave Paris in two or three days, but not for Metz. I have an aged kinswoman, who lives at Versailles, on the Rue Reservoir, to whom I ought to pay my respects. Then I am intrusted by my father with the conclusion of an important family affair, and in eight or ten days I expect to see the party from whom I am to receive further directions about it. I shall not probably go back to my father before the early part of December, — that is, unless the King wishes, for any reason, that I should hasten my return to Metz."

"No, Monsieur! Take your own time. Go to Versailles. Attend to these family affairs, as your father has advised. Only, when they are done, go back to your father, and say that I have not forgotten him, that I know him to be among the *faithless, faithful found*, and that I shall some day recommend him to General Lafayette, in order that the General may recommend him to Monsieur du Portail for honorable advancement."

Lafayette smiled to himself at this new allusion to his own omnipotence. "Sire," he said, "I should long ago have commended the gentlemen of the Bouillé family to your Majesty's favor, if I had not the honor of being related to them. I am sometimes deterred from doing

justice to brave men, by the fear that I shall be accused of turning the favors of the King towards my own kinsfolk."

"Your forbearance is indeed unusual, and approaches the marvellous. We will talk of this hereafter!"

"The King will allow me to say," said the young Count at this juncture, "that my father would regard it as unkind, almost as a disgrace, if any military advancement should deprive him in whole or in part of the means of serving your Majesty."

"Oh, that's well understood, Count," said the King. "I shall not allow his position to be interfered with, unless to confer upon him one more in accordance with his desires and my own. Leave us to manage that, General Lafayette and myself, and betake yourself to your pleasures, — though without forgetting your business affairs. Adieu, gentlemen, adieu!"

The King dismissed them with a dignified air, in strong contrast to the coarse costume with which he was clothed.

When the door closed after them he said to himself: "Well, I think that young man understood me, and that in six or eight days I shall have Master Gamain and his apprentice to aid me in finishing my lock."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

OLD ACQUAINTANCES.

BETWEEN five and six o'clock, on the evening of the same day when Louis de Bouillé had the honor of being received, first by the Queen and then by the King, a scene — which we wish to assist our readers in observing — was taking place in the fourth and upper story of a small, old, dirty, gloomy house, on the Rue Juiverie.

We therefore convoy our readers to the entrance of Exchange Bridge, — whether they dismount from their chariots or from cabs, whether they pay six thousand francs a year for coachman, two horses, and the carriage, or give thirty sous a day for a simple hired vehicle, with a public number.

We cross the bridge with them. We enter the Rue Pelleterie, which we follow as far as the Rue Juiverie, where we stop in front of the third door on the left.

We know very well that the appearance of that door — which the tenants of the house do not take the trouble to fasten, because they fancy their dwellings present no nocturnal temptations to the noble thieves from the Cité — is not attractive ; but, as has been said, we have business with the people who inhabit the attics of this house ; and as they will not come to us, why, we must go bravely to them, — dear gentleman, or well-beloved lady-reader.

Walk carefully as possible, in order not to slip in the sticky mud, which forms the soil of the narrow and dark passage-way which we enter. Let us gather our skirts

about us, in order not to let them brush the walls of the damp and greasy stairway, which crawls up from the end of that alley, like the fragments of a disjointed serpent. Let us place vials of vinegar under our nostrils, or press perfumed handkerchiefs to our faces, in order that this most subtle and aristocratic of our senses, the sense of smell, may escape, so far as possible, any contact with the ammoniated and tainted air, which penetrates mouth, nose, and eyes, all at once.

We will pause at the top of the third staircase, in front of a door on which the innocent hand of some youthful designer has traced certain outlines in chalk, which at first might be mistaken for cabalistic figures, but are only unfortunate essays in the sublime art of Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, and Michael Angelo.

If you please, we will look through the keyhole, in order, dear gentleman or lady, that you may recognize, if you have a good memory, the personages whom you are to encounter. If you do not recognize them at sight, you can apply your ear to the door, and listen. It will be strange indeed, if hearing does not then come to the aid of sight, inasmuch as there are few of our dear readers who have not perused our story called "The Queen's Necklace." Thus it is, that our senses complement each other.

First let us ascertain what can be seen through the keyhole.

We see the interior of a miserable chamber, occupied by three persons. These three persons are a man, a woman, and a child.

The man is forty-five years old, and appears fifty-five; the woman is thirty-four, and appears forty; the child is five, and appears to be that age, for he has not yet had time to grow old too fast.

The man is clothed in an old uniform of a sergeant of the French Guards, a uniform venerated since the Fourteenth of July, the day when the French Guards united themselves with the populace, and exchanged gunshots with Lambesc's Germans and Besenval's Swiss.

This man holds in his hand a whole pack of cards, from the ace, through the deuce, and the three and four of each color, up to the king. He is trying, for the hundredth time, — for the thousandth, for the ten thousandth time, — an infallible double and progressive cubic reckoning, a scheme by which he may always break the gaming bank. By his side reposes a card pricked as full of holes as there are stars in the sky. We have said *reposes*, but we hasten to take that word back. *Repose* is not the right word to employ in reference to a card which the gamester — incontestably he is a gamester — torments incessantly, and consults every five minutes.

The woman is clad in an old silk gown. With her the misery seems more terrible, because it figures in conjunction with the remains of luxury. Her hair is done up in a pug, and held by a copper comb, which was once upon a time gilded. Her hands are scrupulously kept; and by dint of cleanliness, they have preserved, or rather have acquired, a certain aristocratic pose. Her nails, which Baron de Taverney, in his brutal realism, used to call claws, are always rounded into the chestnut shape. Finally some old-style slippers, worn out in spots, and formerly embroidered in gold and silk, give her feet free play, which are also partly covered with the remains of some clocked stockings.

As to her face, as we have before said, it belongs to a woman of thirty-four or thirty-five, and if artistically decorated, according to the mode of the day, would enable her to appear no older than she really is, or even to count

five years below her true age ; for, as said the Abbé of Celle, till five or even ten years after, women cling desperately to twenty-nine. Deprived of rouge and powder, and thereby stripped of all means for concealing the effect of her sighs and unhappiness, this woman's third or fourth decade, this third or fourth flight of time, convicts her of several years beyond her proper portion.

Haggard as is this face, one dreams of having seen it before ; and without the ability to answer the question, — inasmuch as the mind, however strong on the wing, hesitates to overleap such a distance, — one asks in what gilded palace, in what six-horse carriage, in the midst of what royal dust, he has before seen a resplendent face, of which this is only the faded reflection.

The child is five years old, as we have said. He has hair outspread like a cherub's, in one of Carlo Dolci's pictures. His cheeks are round as pippins. He has the demoniacal eyes of his mother, the greedy mouth of his father, and the laziness and vacillation of both.

He wears a coat of threadbare velvet ; and while munching a slice of jam-covered bread, from the corner grocery, he shreds the end of an old tricolored belt, fringed with copper, into the crown of an old felt hat.

All this is lighted by a candle with a gigantic snuff, for which a bottle serves as a candlestick. This places the man with the cards in the light, and leaves the rest of the apartment in semi-darkness.

This is the situation. Now if ocular inspection has taught us nothing, let us try the aural method, as formerly proposed.

Listen ! It is the child who first breaks the silence, as he tosses over his head his bread tart, which falls at the bottom of the bed, now reduced to a single mattress.

"Mamma," he says, "I'm tired of sweetened bwead !
Pouah !"

"Well, what dost want, Toussaint ?"

"I want a stick of wed barley canny."

"Hearest thou, Beausire ?" says the woman.

Then, noting that he is absorbed in his calculations, she asks, louder than before : "Dost thou hear what this poor child says ?"

The same silence !

Then, raising her foot as high as her hand, she takes off a slipper, and throws it at the calculator's nose. "Hey, Beausire !" she cries.

"Oh well, what is it ?" he asks, with a decided expression of ill-humor.

"Toussaint, here, wants a red stick of sugar candy, because he is tired of jam, poor child."

"He shall have it to-morrow."

"I want it to-day ! I want it this evening ! I want it wight off, now !" cries the child in a yelping tone, which threatens to breed a tempest.

"Toussaint, my dear," says the father, "I counsel thee to silence, or thou wilt have trouble with papa !"

The child yells, but the yell is drawn from him by fractiousness rather than fear.

"Touch that child a bit, drunkard, and thou'lt have trouble with me !" says the mother, shaking at Beausire her white hand, which, thanks to the care wherewith its owner sharpens her finger-nails, looks as if it might belong to a griffin.

"Hey ? Who the devil's going to touch the young one ? Thou knowest that's only my way of talking, Madame Olivia. Even if a fellow sometimes bangs the mother's gown, he always respects the child's frock. Come, — come and embrace this poor Beausire, who in a

week will be as rich as a king. Come, come, my little Nicole !”

“When you *are* as rich as a king, my jewel, it will be quite time enough to embrace you, but till then, — not for me !”

“But when I tell thee it’s all the same as if I had a million, do give me an advance kiss, to bring us good luck. The baker will soon give us credit !”

“A man who counts upon millions, and yet asks to be trusted for a four-pound loaf !”

“Me wants some wed barley canny !” cries the younkety, in a tone which is the harbinger of worse outcries to come.

“See here, millionaire, give this baby a morsel of sugar candy !”

Beausire makes a motion of his hand towards his pouch, but it accomplishes only half the journey. “Thou well knowest that yesterday I gave thee my last twenty-four sou piece.”

“Then thou hast some money, ma !” says the child, turning towards her whom the respectable Monsieur Beausire sometimes calls Olivia and sometimes Nicole. “Give me a sou to buy a stick of wed barley canny !”

“Here are two sous, thou naughty child ; but take care and don’t fall, going downstairs !”

“Tanks, little mother,” says the child, jumping up and down for joy, and holding out his hand.

“Stop ! come here, till I put on thy belt again, and thy hat, thou droll chicken ; for it must not be said that Monsieur de Beausire lets his child run about the streets half rigged. It may be all one to him, for he’s a *no-heart*, but such things make *me* die of shame.”

The child greatly desires, even at the risk of what the neighbors may say about the heir presumptive of the

house of Beausire, to rid himself of that hat and belt, whereof he has never been able to see the utility ; although, in their freshness and glow, these articles excited the admiration of the other children ; but as belt and hat are among the conditions attached to the two-sou piece, it is necessary for him to put them on, which the young tease reluctantly does. However, he consoles himself, before he goes out, by thrusting his ten-centime (or two-sou) piece under his father's nose, who, absorbed in his calculations, only smiles at this charming playfulness.

Presently they can hear his step, hastened by appetite, but still timorous, receding down the stairway.

The woman shuts the door, after following the urchin out with her eyes, and turns her attention from son to father. After a brief silence she says : " Ah ha, Monsieur de Beausire, your intelligence had better do something forthwith to get us out of this miserable hole ; or else I must see what *I* can do ;" and she pronounces these words in a mincing way, as a woman might, whose mirror declares to her of a morning : " Be calm ! With such a face as yours, no woman need die of hunger."

" Presently, my little Nicole ! Thou seest that I'm busy."

" Yes, in changing those cards about, and in pricking holes in a piece of cardboard."

" But when I tell thee what I've discovered —"

" What ?"

" My combination."

" Good ! So we begin all over again. Beausire, I give you fair warning, that I shall send my memory rummaging among my old acquaintances, and see if I can't think of one of them who's able to send such a looney as you to the Charenton Asylum."

"But don't I tell thee this combination is infallible?"

"Ah, if Marshal Richelieu was n't dead!" mutters the young woman to herself.

"What sayest thou?"

"Or if Cardinal Rohan wa'n't ruined!"

"Hey?"

"Or if Madame de la Motte had n't run away!"

"What art thou saying, please?"

"If I could only recover some of my old friends, and not be obliged to share the misery of an old cavalry man like this!" and with a gesture fit for a queen, Mademoiselle Nicole Legay — now called Madame Olivia — contemptuously indicates Beausire.

"But I tell thee," he repeats, with an air of conviction, "that to-morrow we shall be rich!"

"With millions?"

"Yes, millions!"

"Show me the first ten golden louis out of your millions, and I'll take the rest for granted."

"Very well, thou shalt see them this very night, — ten golden louis. That's just the sum promised me!"

"And thou'lt give them to me, my little Beausire?" says Nicole, quickly.

"Well, I'll give thee five, to buy a silk gown for thyself, and velvet frock for the little one. Then, with the other five —"

"Well, well, with the other five —?"

"I will bring thee a million!"

"Wretch, — again gambling!"

"But I tell thee I've found the infallible combination at last!"

"Oh yes, twin sister to that other combination, which ate up the sixty thousand francs coming to thee after that Portuguese affair."

"Ill-gotten wealth never does any good!" says Beausire, sententiously; "and I always had a notion, that the way in which that money came to us was sure to bring bad luck."

"I suppose the ten louis talked about come by inheritance? Perhaps some uncle has died in America or India, and bequeathed ten louis —"

"These ten louis," rejoins Beausire, with an air of superiority, "these ten louis, Mademoiselle Nicole Legay, — yes, these ten louis, understand, — were earned, not only honestly, but honorably, and in a cause wherein I find myself much interested, like all the nobility of France."

"You are then a *nobleman*, Monsieur Beausire?" says Nicole, maliciously.

"Mademoiselle Legay, say De Beausire, — *De Beausire*," he reiterates, "as it is recorded in the certificate of the birth of your child, registered in the sacristy of Saint Paul's Church, and signed by your servant, — Jean Baptiste Toussaint de Beausire, on the very day when I gave him my name —"

"A great gift, that!" mutters Nicole.

"— And my fortune!" adds Beausire, emphatically.

"If the good God never sends him anything else," she says, shaking her head, "the poor little chap is likely to live on charity and die in an almshouse."

"Well now," he says, with an air of vexation, "one can't stand this! Thou art never contented!"

"Then don't stand it!" cries Nicole, opening the flood-gates of her long-restrained wrath. "Good God, who wants you to stand it? Thank God, I'm not worried on my own account, nor on my child's. Beginning to-night, I also will look for fortune, — but elsewhere."

Nicole arose and took three steps towards the door.

Beausire placed himself before the door, barring the way with outstretched arms, and saying: "But when I tell thee, naughty girl, that this fortune —"

"Well, well?"

"It will come this evening. Even if the combination is wrong, — which it cannot be, after all my calculations, there will only be five louis lost!"

"There are times when five louis are a fortune, — a fortune, do you hear, Monsieur Spendthrift? You don't know that, oh no! — you who've eaten your gold by the houseful!"

"That proves my merit, Nicole. If I used up that gold, it was I who earned it; and if I won that money, I can win more elsewhere. There's a benevolent Providence for such fellows as I, — if they're only *adroit*."

"Oh yes, count on that!"

"Mademoiselle Nicole," said Beausire, "art thou an atheist?"

She shrugged her shoulders.

"Dost thou belong to the school of Voltaire, who denies Providence?"

"Beausire, you're a fool!"

"Coming from among the common people, as thou dost, it would not be astonishing, thy holding such notions. I warn thee, they are not the sort belonging to my social caste, or in harmony with my political opinions."

"You're insolent, Monsieur!" said Nicole.

"As for me, — dost hear, — as for me, I have *faith*; and if anybody should say to me: 'Thy son, Jean Baptiste Toussaint de Beausire, who has gone out for a stick of red barley candy, with a two-sou piece, will come up again with a purse full of gold in his hand; I should reply: 'Very likely, if it is God's will!'" and Beausire lifted his eyes beatifically to Heaven.

"Beausire, you're an idiot!"

She had hardly uttered these words when they heard the voice of young Toussaint, calling up the stairway: "Papa! Mamma!"

Both Beausire and Nicole hearkened to the voice of their pet.

"Papa! Mamma!" repeated that voice, coming nearer and nearer.

"What has happened?" cried Nicole, opening the door with maternal solicitude. "Come, my child, come!"

"Papa! Mamma!" continued the approaching voice, like that of a ventriloquist, when he pretends to imitate the sound of speech, heard through an opening cellar door.

"I should not be surprised," said Beausire, noting an element of joy in that voice, "if the miracle had come to pass, and the little chap had found the purse of which I spoke just now."

At that moment the urchin appeared on the last turn of the stairway, and ran into the chamber, holding in his mouth his stick of barley candy, squeezing a bag of sweetmeats against his breast with his left arm, and displaying in his outstretched right hand a golden louis, which, by the light of the lone candle, shone like the star Aldebaran.

"My God, my God!" cried Nicole, leaving the door to shut of its own accord. "What has happened to the poor dear!" and she covered the sticky mouth with maternal kisses, which nothing can disgust, because they purify everything they touch.

"Here it is," said the father, adroitly scooping in the louis, and examining it by the candle, "here it is, a genuine gold louis, worth twenty-four francs."

"Where hast thou found it, little monkey? I must go there, and search for others like it."

"I did n't find it, papa! Somebody give it to me!"

"How? Somebody gave it to thee?" cried the mother.

"Yes, mamma, — a gentleman."

Nicole was on the point of asking, as Beausire had asked about the louis, where the gentleman was; but, rendered prudent by experience, and knowing Beausire's jealous susceptibility, she contented herself with repeating: "A gentleman?"

"Yes, little mother," said the child, cracking his red candy between his teeth, "a gentleman."

"A gentleman?" repeated Beausire, in his turn.

"Yes, little papa, a gentleman, who came into the grocery while I was there, and says: 'Monsieur Gwocer, is n't this young gentleman named *De Beausire*, whom you have the honor of serving?'"

Beausire drew himself up, and Nicole shrugged her shoulders.

"What did the grocer say, my son?" asked Beausire.

"He says: 'I don't know about no gentleman, but his name is Beausire, certainly.' — 'And don't he live nearby?' asks the gentleman. — 'There, in the house at the left, up thwee flights.' — 'Give all sorts of goodies to this child, and I'll pay,' says the gentleman. Then he says to me: 'Here, pet, there's a louis;' and he also says: 'That's to buy other bonbons, when these are all eaten up.' Then he puts this louis into my hand, the grocer puts the package on my arm, and I come away happy. — Hold on! Where's my louis?" and the child, who had not observed his father's legerdemain, began to hunt about for the goldpiece.

"Thou hast lost it, careless child!" said Beausire.

"No! I hain't! I hain't! I hain't!"

The discussion might have become serious, but for what followed, which necessarily put an end to it.

While the child, doubtful about the matter, was hunting around the floor after the goldpiece, which reposed quietly in the deep pocket of papa's waistcoat; while papa was admiring the intelligence of young Toussaint, as shown in the story he had brought home, — though that story has perhaps been a trifle clarified under our pen; while Nicole, though sharing the enthusiasm of her lover for this precocious eloquence, was asking herself seriously who this giver of sweetmeats, this lous-lender, could be, — the door opened slowly, and a pleasant voice uttered these words: "Good-evening, Mademoiselle Nicole! Good-evening, Monsieur de Beausire! Good-evening, little Toussaint!"

Each of the three turned towards the side whence came the voice.

On the threshold stood a man elegantly dressed, and gazing with a smiling face at the family group.

"Ah!" cried the youngster, "the bonbon gentleman!"

"Cagliostro!" exclaimed Nicole and Beausire in a breath.

"You have a charming child, Monsieur," said the Count, "and you ought to be very proud of being his father."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

IN WHICH THE READER WILL HAVE THE PLEASURE OF
FINDING M. DE BEAUSIRE THE SAME MAN HE WAS
WHEN THEY LEFT HIM.

THERE was a moment's pause after Cagliostro's gracious words. He came into the middle of the chamber, and glanced inquiringly about, doubtless wishing to inform himself as to the moral, and especially the pecuniary situation, of his old acquaintances, into whose midst he had unexpectedly come, led by the terrible underground intrigues of which he was the centre.

The result of this glance left no doubt in such a perspicacious mind as the Count's. Even a superficial observer might have guessed the truth, that the poverty-stricken household had reached its last twenty-four sous.

Of the three persons into whose midst the apparition of the Count had brought such consternation, the first to break silence was little Toussaint, whose memory only recalled the events of that evening, and whose conscience therefore did not reproach him. "Ah Monsieur," he said, "ain't it too bad? I've lost my goldpiece."

Nicole opened her mouth to state the facts as they were, but she reflected that possibly her silence might procure her child a second louis, and that this second *she* should inherit; and she was not mistaken.

"Thou hast lost thy goldpiece, poor child?" said Cagliostro. "Never mind! Here are two. Take care not to lose them this time!"

Taking two golden louis from a purse, whose plumpness attracted the covetous attention of Beausire, he let them fall into the tight little hand of the child, who said, running to Nicole, "Here, mamma, here's one for thee and one for me," as he divided his treasure with his mother.

Cagliostro noted the tenacity with which the spurious sergent's glance followed his purse in its various evolutions, from the time when he took it out, and it was opened in giving passage to forty-eight francs, till it was returned to his pocket again. Seeing it disappear in the depths of the Count's vest, Nicole's sweetheart sighed.

"What, Monsieur, always melancholy?" said Cagliostro.

"And you, Monsieur, always the millionaire!"

"My God! — You, who are one of the greatest philosophers I ever heard of, either in these degenerate later ages, or in the cycles of classic antiquity, — you ought to be acquainted with the time-honored maxim, *Money makes not happiness*. I have known you when you were comparatively rich."

"Yes, that's true. I had nearly one hundred thousand francs," said Beausire.

"That's possible; but at the time when I knew you, you had already eaten up some forty thousand francs; though if you had only sixty thousand left, that would be a good round sum for an old soldier."

Beausire sighed again. "What is sixty thousand francs, compared with the money at *your* disposal?"

"In my capacity as trustee, you are perhaps correct; but if we reckon more carefully, I fancy you would be Saint Martin, and I the pauper; and to keep me from freezing with the cold, my dear Beausire, you would have to give me half of your cloak. Do you remember the circumstances under which I first met you? You had then,

as I just said, about sixty thousand francs in your pocket ; but were you any happier ? ”

Beausire emitted a sad retrospective sigh, which was almost a groan.

“ You see ! ” insisted Cagliostro. “ Now would you give up your present condition, even if you possessed nothing but the unlucky louis which you confiscated from young Toussaint — ? ”

“ Monsieur ! ” interrupted the old soldier.

“ We won’t quarrel now, Beausire ! We quarrelled once, and you will remember that you were compelled to go into the street to find your sword, which had jumped out of the window ? You recollect it, don’t you ? ” he continued, as Beausire made no response. “ It is something worth remembering. Well, now I ask again, even though you possessed only the one unlucky louis which you confiscated from young Toussaint, ” — and this time the insinuation passed unnoticed, — “ would you exchange your actual position for the much more precarious situation from which I once helped to extricate you ? ”

“ No, Monsieur, ” said Beausire, “ you are right indeed ! I would not make the exchange. Alas, I was separated from my dear Nicole ! ”

“ Yes, and somewhat sought after by the police, on account of a certain affair in Portugal. What the Devil ever came of that affair ? A most villainous affair, as I remember ! ”

“ Oh well, it is drowned in oblivion. ”

“ So much the better, for it must have annoyed you very much. But don’t reckon too surely on this falling into oblivion. They are great divers, these police, and if the net goes as deep as the water, a scandalous crime is easier to fish up than a beautiful pearl. ”

"But for the misery to which we are reduced, Monsieur, —"

"You would be happy. Indeed, you would only need a thousand louis to make that happiness complete."

Nicole's eyes lighted up, and Beausire's were flaming.

"That is to say," cried Beausire, "if we had a thousand louis, — that is, twenty-four thousand francs, we should buy some country-place with half the amount, get a little income from the other half, and I should become a cultivator."

"Like Cincinnatus!"

"This would leave Nicole free to conduct the education of our child."

"Like Cornelia! — Well, not only would your conduct be exemplary, but touching. You hope then to get this amount out of the business which you are engaged in just now?"

Beausire started. "What business?"

"That in which you figure as a sergeant of the Guards, — that for which you have a rendezvous to-night, under the arcades of Royal Square."

Beausire became pale as death. "Oh Monsieur?" he said, clasping his hands beseechingly.

"What is it?"

"Don't give me away!"

"Bah! How you wander! Am I a lieutenant of police?"

"There, I told thee so," said Nicole, — "that this was some wretched affair."

"Ah, you knew about it, this affair, Mademoiselle Legay?" asked Cagliostro.

"No, Monsieur," said she, "and for that very reason I suspected him. When he hides an affair from me, that's because it's bad, — I make sure of that."

"But as to this affair, which now concerns him, you

may be mistaken. It may be an excellent affair, on the contrary."

"Is it not?" cried Beausire. "The Count is a gentleman, and understands that all the nobility are interested —"

"In its success!" replied Cagliostro. "It is however true that the common people, on their side, are interested to have it fail. Meantime, if you will believe me, my dear Beausire, — and you understand, it is the counsel of a friend which I give, of a true friend! — well, if you will believe me, you will take part neither with the nobility nor with the people."

"But whose part shall I take?"

"Your own!"

"Mine?"

"To be sure!" said Nicole. "Pardieu! Thou hast done enough for other folks. It's time to think of thyself!"

"You hear? She speaks like Saint Chrysostom, — John of the Golden Mouth. Remember this, Beausire, that everything has a good side and a bad side, — good for some, bad for others. No affair, whatever it may be, is bad for everybody or good for everybody. Well, the one thing needful is to get on the right side."

"Ah ha! and it appears that I am not on that side, hey?"

"Not at all, dear Beausire! No, that does n't follow. I will only add, — you know I meddle with matters to play the prophet, — I will only add, that if you are mixed up in this affair, it will not be at the risk of your honor, or even of your fortune, but you will run the risk of your life. Yes, you will probably be hanged."

"But, Monsieur," said Beausire, trying to keep his countenance, but wiping away the sweat which rolled down his forehead, "they do not hang a gentleman."

"That's true ; but in order to obtain the privilege of decapitation, it would be necessary to produce your proofs of nobility, which would perhaps take so long as to weary the judges, who would therefore ordain that you should be provisionally hanged. You will tell me that in a good cause the punishment matters nothing, that

Crime makes the shame, and not the scaffold,

as a great poet has said."

"Well then !" stammered Beausire, more and more frightened.

"Oh well, you are not so much attached to your opinions that you wish to sacrifice your life, — I understand that. The Devil ! 'One can live but once !' as another poet says, — not so great as the first, perhaps, but one who at least has reason on his side."

"I have always noticed," said Beausire at last, "in all the relations in which I have had the honor to be associated with you, that you have a way of talking which would make the hair of even a moderately timid man stand on end."

"Oh, the Devil, such was not my intention," said Cagliostro. "Besides, you are not a timid man !"

"No," responded Beausire, "not generally ! However, there are certain circumstances —"

"Oh yes, I understand ! — for instance, when one has behind him the galleys, for theft, and before him the gallows, for the crime of treason against the people, — *lèse-nation*, — as the offence would now be called, I suppose, which has for its aim the abduction of the King."

"Monsieur !" cried Beausire, utterly confounded.

"You unlucky dog !" said Olivia. "Then it was on this kidnapping business that you based your dreams of gold ?"

"And he was not entirely in the wrong, my dear Demoiselle; only, as I said just now, there is a bad and good side to everything, a bright face and a cloudy face. Beausire has had the misfortune to caress the shady face, to adopt the bad side; but if he will turn about —"

"Isn't it too late?" asked Nicole.

"Certainly not!"

"What shall I do?" asked Beausire.

"Suppose one thing," said Cagliostro, thoughtfully.

"Well, what?"

"Suppose your plot should fail. Suppose those two accomplices, the man in the brown cloak and the man with a mask, should be arrested. Suppose — it is necessary to suppose all sorts of things nowadays — suppose they should be condemned to death. Augéard and Besenval were acquitted, to be sure; but suppose that these accomplices should be condemned to death. Suppose, — don't be in a hurry, for by supposition after supposition we get at the facts, — suppose you should be regarded as one of their accomplices. Suppose the cord was around your neck, and somebody should say to you, in answer to your complaints, — for in such a situation, however courageous he may be, — great Heavens! — a man must lament more or less —"

"Go on, go on, Count, I beg of you. It seems as if I were already strangling."

"Pardieu, that's not surprising, seeing that I was theorizing about the cord at your throat! Well, suppose somebody, a Voice, should come to you and say: 'Poor Beausire, dear Monsieur, this is all your own fault!'"

"How so?" cried Beausire.

"There, you see! By theories upon theories we get at the facts; and you answer me as if we had already touched bottom."

“I own up!”

“Very well. ‘How so?’ you would say to the Voice; and the Voice would reply: ‘Because you might not only escape this malefactor’s doom, which already holds you in its talons, but gain a thousand louis, wherewith to buy that little house in the country, with green hedges, whither you wish to retire with Mademoiselle Olivia and little Toussaint, and five hundred francs a year income, coming to you from the twelve thousand francs which had not been used in buying the place, — to live, as you said, as a gardener, going about in slippers in summer time and brogans in winter. Now, instead of this charming prospect, we have — *you* particularly — before our eyes the Place de Grève, planted with two or three villainous gallows-posts, of which the highest offers you its arm. Ugh! An ugly outlook, my poor Monsieur de Beausire!’”

“But after all, Count, how can I manage to escape, — how gain the thousand louis necessary to assure my tranquillity, and also that of Nicole and Toussaint?”

“You are always asking something! Well, the Voice might reply: ‘Nothing easier. You have there, very near you, only two steps away, the Count Cagliostro.’ — ‘I know him,’ you would reply, — ‘a foreign nobleman, who lives in Paris for his pleasure, and who is bored almost to death unless he has plenty of news.’ — ‘That’s the man,’ the Voice would say. ‘Well, you have only to hunt him up, and say to him —’”

“But I don’t know where he lives!” cried Beausire. “I don’t know if he is still in Paris. I don’t even know if he’s still alive.”

“To which, dear Beausire, the Voice would respond, that this was precisely why the Count had come to find you; and the moment he found you, there would remain

to you no convenient excuse. Well, you would then say to him : 'Monsieur, I know you for an epicure in the matter of news. Now I have the very latest. *Monsieur*, the King's brother, is engaged in a conspiracy.' — 'Bah !' would be his reply. — 'Yes, with the Marquis de Favras.' — 'Impossible !' — 'Yes indeed ! I speak wittingly, because I am one of the agents of Favras.' — 'Truly ? Well, what is the aim of this plot ?' — 'The abduction of the King and his removal to Péronne. Well, Count, for your recreation, if you so desire, I will bring you, hour by hour, — minute by minute, if necessary, — intelligence as to how the affair goes on.' Then the Count, who is a generous seigneur, would reply : 'Will you really do this, Beausire ?' — 'Yes indeed !' — 'Well, as every effort deserves its reward, if you keep your word, why, I have there, in a corner, twenty-four thousand francs, which I mean to use in some good way. My faith, why not spend them on my caprice ? Now on the day when the King is abducted, or Favras taken, if you come and tell me so, on the honor of a gentleman, the twenty-four thousand livres shall be yours, as shall be these ten louis, — not as an advance, not even as a loan, but simply as a gift.'"

At these words, like an actor who rehearses with all the accessories, Cagliostro drew from his pouch his heavy purse, introduced into it his thumb and finger, and with a dexterity which testified to his familiarity with that species of exercise, he pinched up just ten louis, no more and no less ; while it is but fair to say, on his side, that Beausire put forth his hand to receive them.

Cagliostro pushed this hand gently aside, saying : "Excuse me, but we were only dealing in *suppositions*, I believe !"

"Yes, but," said Beausire whose eyes gleamed like live

coals, "as you said, by the way of theories and suppositions we reach facts."

"Have we reached that point?"

Beausire hesitated. We hasten to say that the cause of this hesitation was not honesty, was not fidelity to his pledges, was not an elevated conscience. We affirm, what our readers know Beausire too well to contradict, that the cause of his hesitation was merely the fear lest the Count should not keep his promise.

"My dear Beausire," said Cagliostro, "I well know what is passing through your mind."

"Yes, you are right! I hesitate about betraying the trust reposed in me by a gallant man;" and he lifted his eyes to Heaven, and shook his head, as much as to say, "How hard this is!"

"No, that is not so," replied Cagliostro; "and you are a new illustration of the truth of that wise saw, *No man knows himself.*"

"What then?" demanded Beausire, flurried by the Count's facility in reading the bottom of his heart.

"You fear that I will not keep my promise about giving you the thousand louis."

"Oh Monsieur! —"

"That is but natural. Well, I offer you a guaranty."

"A guaranty! Monsieur has no need —"

"A guaranty which will personally answer for me."

"And what is this security?" asked Beausire, timidly.

"Mademoiselle Nicole Olivia Legay."

"Oh, if the Count promises, the thing is as good as done!" cried Nicole.

"You see, Monsieur, here is the evidence that I scrupulously fulfil my agreements. Once upon a time Mademoiselle was in the same situation that you are now, minus the conspiracy; that is, she was sought by the

police. I made her an offer, — to make her retreat at my house. She feared for her honor. I gave her my word; and in spite of all the temptations which beset me, — and which you, Beausire, understand better than anybody else, — I kept my word. — Is n't this so, my dear Mademoiselle?"

"Oh yes! By our little Toussaint, I swear it!"

"You believe, then, Mademoiselle Nicole, that I will keep my word, if to-day I engage to give him twenty-four thousand livres on the day when the King takes his flight, or Favras is arrested? And this does n't take into the account, be it understood, that I also loosen the knot which threatens to strangle you at any moment, — so that there will be no further question of rope or gallows, — at any rate, as connected with this affair. Of course I cannot be responsible beyond that. — One moment! Let us understand each other. There are some vocations —"

"As for me," said Nicole, "it is all the same as if a notary had passed the contracts."

"Well, my dear Mademoiselle," said Cagliostro, placing in a row on the table the ten louis, which he had heretofore kept in his hand, "inspire the heart of Monsieur de Beausire with this conviction, and the affair is concluded;" and he made a sign with his hand for Beausire to go and talk with Nicole alone.

The conversation only lasted five minutes; but it must be said that during those five minutes it was very animated.

Meanwhile Cagliostro looked at the card full of holes, which he held up before the candle, nodding to it as if he was saluting an old acquaintance.

"Ah ha!" he said. "This is the famous combination of Monsieur Law, which you have picked up. I lost a

million on that very combination ;" and he carelessly dropped the card on the table.

This observation imparted new activity to the conversation of Nicole and Beausire. At last Beausire appeared to have made up his mind. He came to Cagliostro with outstretched hand, like a jockey who wishes to conclude a good trade ; but the Count drew back and frowned.

"Monsieur, between gentlemen, the word is sufficient. You have mine ; give me yours !"

"On the faith of a Beausire, it is agreed."

"That is enough," said Cagliostro. Then he added, drawing from his fob a watch, on which was a picture of King Frederic of Prussia, enriched with diamonds : "It is nine o'clock, less a quarter-hour. At nine o'clock precisely you will be waited for under the arcades on Royal Square, on the side of the Sully Mansion. Take these ten louis and put them in your waistcoat pocket, buckle on your coat, gird on your sword, cross Notre Dame Bridge, follow the Rue Saint Antoine. No need for anybody to go with you."

Beausire did not need speaking to a second time. He took the ten louis, put them into his pocket, buckled on his coat, and belted on his sword.

"Where shall I see you again, Count?"

"In Saint John Cemetery, if you please. When one wishes not to be overheard, and to talk over such affairs as this, better be among the dead than among the living."

"At what hour?"

"As soon as you are at liberty. The first comer will wait for the other."

"Monsieur has something more to do?" asked Beausire anxiously, seeing that the Count did not get ready to follow him out.

"Yes, I wish to chat with Mademoiselle Nicole."

Beausire made a sharp gesture.

"Oh, be easy, my friend. I respected her honor when she was a young girl ; all the more reason why I should respect her as the mother of a family. Go along, Beausire, go along !"

Beausire glanced at his Nicole, as much as to say : "Madame de Beausire, be worthy of the confidence I repose in you !" Tenderly he embraced the young Tous-saint, saluted the Count with respect mingled with some distrust, and went out precisely as the clock on Notre Dame rang out the three-quarters past eight.

CHAPTER XXXV.

ŒDIPUS AND LOT.

It lacked but a few minutes of midnight when a man, emerging from the Rue Royale into the Rue Saint Antoine, followed the latter street as far as Saint Catherine's Fountain, and paused a moment within its projecting shadow, to assure himself that he was not shadowed by some spy. Thence he took the lane which leads to the Mansion Saint Paul, whence he entered the very dark and completely empty street named after the King of Sicily. Then, somewhat relaxing his gait, he advanced towards the extremity of this street, and hesitatingly turned into that called White Cross, and finally stopped, but still more hesitatingly, before the grated gate of Saint John Cemetery.

There he waited, as if he feared he should see some spectre rise out of the earth, and wiped the sweat from his face with the sleeve of his sergeant's coat.

At the very moment when midnight sounded, something like a ghost appeared, gliding among the yews and cypresses. This ghost approached the gate ; and soon, by the noise of the key in the lock, one could see that the spectre, if spectre it was, not only possessed the faculty of coming out of his tomb, but, when he was once outside the grave, of going also outside the cemetery.

At this clanking sound our military friend recoiled.

"Well, well, Beausire," said the hectoring voice of Cagliostro, "don't you know me, or have you forgotten our appointment ?"

"Ah, is it you?" said Beausire, breathing like a man from whose heart a great weight has been lifted. "So much the better. These devilish streets are so dark and lonesome that one does n't know whether he would rather find his way alone, or meet somebody."

"Ah, bah!" said Cagliostro. "What, you afraid of anything, at any hour of day or night? You would n't have me credit that, — a brave man like you, who wears a sword at his side! Come this side of the gate, dear Beausire, and you'll feel easier, for you'll only encounter myself."

Beausire accepted the bidding, and the lock, which had grated in opening the gate for him, grated again as it was fastened behind him.

"There now," said Cagliostro, "follow this little pathway, dear Monsieur, and, at the end of twenty paces, we shall find a sort of ruined altar, the steps whereof will be marvellously convenient for a chat over our affairs."

Beausire started to obey his leader; but presently he said, after a moment's hesitation: "Where the devil are you going? I can see only briars which scratch me like nails, and grass which comes up to my knees."

"The truth is, that this cemetery is one of the worst kept that I know of; but that is not astonishing. You know hardly anybody is buried here except condemned sinners, who have been executed in the Place de Grève; and for such poor devils, they use small ceremony. Nevertheless, there are several illustrious people buried here. If it were daytime I could show you the place where Bouteville de Montmorency is buried, who was beheaded for fighting a duel; and the Chevalier de Rohan, decapitated for conspiring against the government; and Count Horn, broken on the wheel for assassinating a Jew; and Damiens, quartered for trying to kill Louis Fifteenth, —

and I don't know who else. Oh, you're wrong to traduce Saint John Cemetery. It's badly kept, but very well inhabited."

Beausire followed on, fitting his step to Cagliostro's, as regularly as a soldier, in the second rank, is in the habit of doing with his file-leader.

"Ah!" said the leader, suddenly stopping, in such a way that Beausire, who expected no such halt, ran into Cagliostro's back. "Hold, here's something new. This is the grave of your comrade, Fleur d'Épine, one of the murderers of François the baker. Épine was hanged a week ago, by order of the Châtelet Court. This ought to interest you, as he was an old exempt soldier, like yourself, a genuine recruiter and a sergeant."

Beausire's teeth literally chattered. It seemed as if the thorns, amidst which he was walking, were so many clinched hands, stretching out of the earth to draw him down by his legs, and make him understand that Destiny had there marked a place for his eternal sleep.

"Ah!" said Cagliostro, stopping before a sort of ruin, "here we are, at last!"

Seating himself on a broken stone, he pointed Beausire to another, which seemed placed side by side with the first, expressly to spare Cinna the pains of bringing his seat nearer that of Augustus. It was time, for the legs of the ex-soldier were shaking in such a way that he fell, rather than sat, down upon the stone.

"Now that we can talk at our ease," said Cagliostro, "let us hear what took place under the arcades of Royal Square. The meeting must have been interesting."

"My faith, I must acknowledge that just now my head spins, and I think we shall both be the gainers if you will please question me."

"So be it! I'm a good-natured prince; and if I can

only learn what I want, never mind the form. How many were there under the arcades in Royal Square ?”

“Six, including me.”

“Six, including yourself? Weïl, let us see if they were indeed the men I think. Imprimis, yourself, beyond a doubt.”

Beausire sighed, as much as to say that he should be glad if the doubt were possible.

“You do me the honor to begin with me,” he said, “but there were much greater personages with me.”

“My dear boy, I follow the precept of the Gospel, which declares that the first shall be last. Now if the first are to be last, the last naturally will be first. I proceed, as I tell you, according to the Gospel. First, you *were* there, were you not ?”

“Yes !” said Beausire.

“Then there was your friend Tourcaty, — an old recruiting officer, intrusted with raising the legion for Brabant.”

“Yes, Tourcaty was there.”

“Then there was a good Royalist named Marquié, formerly a sergeant in the French Guards, but now a sub-lieutenant of a central company.”

“Yes, Marquié was there.”

“Next, Monsieur de Favras ?”

“Yes, Favras comes next.”

“Next, the masked man ?”

“Next, the masked man !”

“Have you any information to give me about that masked man, Beausire ?”

He looked at Cagliostro so intently that his eyes seemed to illuminate the obscurity. “Well,” he finally began, “is he not — ?” and then Beausire stopped, as if he feared he should commit a sacrilege by going so far.

"Is he not who?" demanded Cagliostro.

"Is he not —?"

"So! Your tongue is evidently tied, my dear Beausire. You must pay attention to that. Knots in the tongue sometimes bring on knots in the throat; and those, though movable, are not the less dangerous."

Forced from his last intrenchment Beausire finally replied: "Is he not *Monsieur*?"

"Monsieur who?"

"*Monsieur*, — *Monsieur*, the King's brother."

"My dear Beausire, it is quite conceivable that the Marquis de Favras should represent this masked man to be Monsieur de Provence, because Favras has an interest in having it believed that he is supported by the hand of a Prince of the blood royal; and a man who does not know how to lie, does not how to conspire; but that you and your friend Tourcaty, two old recruiters, should let yourselves be imposed upon in this sort of way, is hardly probable, — you, who are accustomed to taking the measure of people about them by feet and inches."

"What then?"

"*Monsieur* is five feet, three inches, and a fraction in height," Cagliostro went on, "while the masked man is nearly five feet and six inches."

"That is true, and I had already thought of it; but if not *Monsieur*, who then can it be?"

"Ah Beausire, I am proud and happy at my ability to teach you something, when I expected only to learn something from you."

"Then," said the ex-soldier, returning little by little to his natural condition, as he realized that he was dealing with realities, "then you know who this man is?"

"Perhaps!"

"Would it be indiscreet to ask —?"

"His name?"

Beausire bowed, to show that this was what he wanted.

"A name is always a ticklish thing to speak, Monsieur, and really, I should like it better if you would guess."

"Guess? I have been trying to, for a fortnight."

"Ah! because nobody aided you!"

"Please aid me yourself, Monsieur Count."

"I ask nothing better. Do you know the history of *Œdipus*?"

"Hardly. I saw it played once at the Comédie Française, but towards the end of the fourth act I had the misfortune to get drowsy."

"Pest! I wish you many such misfortunes, my dear fellow."

"But you see that just now it leaves me ignorant —"

"Well, in two words I will tell you about *Œdipus*. I was acquainted with him as a child at the Court of King Polybius, and as an old man at the Court of King Admetus; so you can believe what I tell you, better than you can believe what is said by *Æschylus*, *Sophocles*, *Seneca*, *Corneille*, *Voltaire*, or *Monsieur Ducis*, who have heard a great deal about *Œdipus*, but never enjoyed the advantage of his acquaintance."

Beausire made a movement, as if to ask *Cagliostro* for some explanation of this strange pretence of having known a man who had been dead thirty-six hundred years; but thinking that it was hardly the thing to interrupt the narrator for such a trifle, he checked himself, and made a sign, as much as to say: "Keep on; I am all attention;" and as a matter of fact *Cagliostro* did keep on.

"Well, I knew *Œdipus*. It had been predicted that he would be the murderer of his father and the husband of his mother; so believing Polybius to be his father, he left the old man's Court without saying good-bye, and

started for Phocis. At the time of his departure I advised his taking a mountain road which I was acquainted with, instead of travelling by the usual road from Daulis to Delphi; but he was pig-headed, and as I could not tell him why I so advised, all my exhortations to change his route were useless. At the branching of the road from Delphi to Thebes, he encountered a man followed by five slaves. This man was mounted in a chariot, and the chariot took up the whole road. All would have been easily adjusted, if the man in the chariot would have consented to move a little to the left, and Œdipus a little to the right; but each wanted to keep in the middle of the highway. The man in the chariot had a choleric temperament, and Œdipus was not naturally patient. The five slaves threw themselves upon Œdipus, one after the other, in front of their master; and one after the other was tumbled over, till at last their master was slain in his turn. Œdipus marched over six corpses, and among them was the man who was really his father; so part of the oracle was fulfilled."

"The Devil," said Beausire.

"Then Œdipus resumed his journey towards Thebes. On the road rises Mount Phocion; and in a pathway, even narrower than that where Œdipus slew his father, a singular animal had his cavern. This animal had wings like an eagle's, body and claws like a lion's, and breasts and head like a woman's."

"Oh Monsieur," said Beausire, "can you believe that such a monster ever existed?"

"I cannot so affirm," replied Cagliostro, gravely, "for when I passed over this road, — a thousand years afterwards, in the time of Epaminondas, — the Sphinx was dead. However, he was living in the Œdipus epoch, and had a mania for stationing himself in the road, proposing

a conundrum to travellers, and devouring them if they could n't guess it. As he kept this up for over three centuries, travellers became more and more scarce, and the Sphinx's teeth very long. When he saw Œdipus coming, the Sphinx placed himself in the middle of the road, and lifted one paw as a sign for the young fellow to stop. 'Traveller,' said he, 'I'm the Sphinx.' — 'What then?' said Œdipus. — 'Well, Destiny has placed me on the earth to propose an enigma to mortals. If they can't solve it, they belong to me. If one should guess it, why I should belong to Death, and of my own accord I should throw myself into yon abyss, where at present I throw the corpses of all those who have the misfortune to come my way.' Œdipus looked over the precipice, and there saw the bleaching bones. 'Very well,' said the young fellow, 'what is the riddle?' — 'This is the riddle,' said the lion-bird: 'What is the animal who goes on four paws in the morning, two at noon, and three at night?' Œdipus reflected an instant and then said, with a smile which did not make the Sphinx altogether comfortable: 'And if I guess it, thou wilt throw thyself into yon abyss?' — 'Such is the law,' responded the Sphinx. — 'Well, that animal is *man*!' replied Œdipus."

"How, *man*?" interrupted Beausire, who was as much interested in the story as if it concerned his Parisian contemporaries.

"Yes, *man*. In infancy — that is, in the morning of life — he creeps on both hands and feet. In adult age — that is, at midday — he walks properly on his two feet. In the evening — that is, in old age — he leans on a cane."

"Mordieu, that's true!" said Beausire. "That staggered the Sphinx!"

"Yes, my dear fellow, staggered him so that he precipitated himself head first into the ravine; and as he

was too honorable to save himself with his wings, which *you* will doubtless think proves him an idiot, he broke his head on the rocks. As to Œdipus, he went on his way, arrived at Thebes, found Jocasta a widow (of the man he had killed at the cross-roads) and married her, thus accomplishing both prophecies, as to killing his father and wedding with his mother."

"But after all, what analogy do you find between the history of Œdipus and the man with the mask?"

"A great analogy. Listen! To begin with, you want his name."

"Yes."

"And I propose to you a conundrum. True, I am of better stuff than the Sphinx, and I won't eat you alive if you can't guess it. Attention! I raise my paw. What young lord is the grandson of his father, the brother of his mother, and the uncle of his sisters?"

"The Devil!" said Beausire, falling into a revery not less profound than that of Œdipus.

"Think it out, my dear fellow!"

"Help me a little, Count."

"Willingly. I asked if you knew the history of Œdipus."

"You did me that honor."

"Well, now we'll pass from profane history to sacred. Do you know the anecdote about the Patriarch Lot?"

"With his two daughters?"

"Precisely."

"Of course I know it," said Beausire; "but — wait a minute — Hey! — yes — what used to be said about old King Louis Fifteenth and his daughter, Madame Adelaide?"

"You are near enough to burn, my dear man."

"Then the man with the mask must be — "

"Five feet and six inches tall."

"Count Louis — !"

"That will do !"

"Count Louis de —"

"Hush !"

"But as you said there was nobody here but dead folks —"

"Yes, but grass sprouts over their graves, and grows faster there than anywhere else. Well, these weeds, like the weeds of King Midas, — do you know the story of King Midas ?"

"No, Monsieur !"

"I will tell it you some other time. For the nonce, let us return to our own muttons."

Then he resumed, more seriously : "You were saying, Beausire ?"

"Excuse me, Monsieur, but I believe *you* were asking certain questions."

"You are right;" and thereupon Cagliostro mentally pondered his catechism.

"On my word, that is true," muttered Beausire. "His father's grandson, his mother's brother, and his sisters' uncle ! That is Louis de Nar — !"

"Attention !" said Cagliostro.

Beausire interrupted his monologue, and listened with all his ears.

"Meanwhile, as there is no longer any doubt about the conspirators, masked or not masked, let us go to the end of the plot."

Beausire indicated with a nod that he was ready to answer.

"The object is to carry off the King, is it not ?"

"That is indeed the aim of the conspiracy."

"To take him to Péronne ?"

"To Péronne!"

"And the means?"

"Pecuniary?"

"Yes, pecuniary, first of all."

"They have two millions."

"Borrowed of a Genoese banker. I know that banker. Is he the only one?"

"I don't know."

"Well, that'll do very well for the money; but money is not enough. Men must be had."

"Lafayette has just authorized raising a legion to go to the help of Brabant, which is in revolt against the German Empire."

"Oh that amiable Lafayette," said Cagliostro to himself; "that is just like him!" Then he added aloud: "So, they'll have a legion! But a legion can't execute such a project. They need an army."

"They have an army!"

"Ah, show us the army!"

"Twelve hundred horsemen will assemble at Versailles. They will start on the day appointed, at eleven at night. By two o'clock in the morning they will enter Paris in three columns."

"Good!"

"The first will enter by the Chaillot Gate; the second by the Roule Barrier; and the third by the Grenelle. The Grenelle column will swallow up General Lafayette. The Chaillot column will choke off Prime Minister Necker. The other column will dispose of Bailly."

"Good!" repeated Cagliostro.

"This done they are to spike the guns, and then the three columns will reunite on the Champs Élysées, and march on the Tuileries, which will be on our side."

"How on your side? Where is the National Guard?"

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"The Brabant volunteers will attend to that. Aided by part of the hired soldiery, — four hundred Swiss, — and by three hundred confederates from the country, the Brabant delegation, thanks to our accurate information about the Tuileries, will take possession of the doors, inside and outside. They will rush in upon the King, exclaiming: 'Sire, the Saint Antoine section is in full insurrection. A carriage is all harnessed. You must flee!' If the King consents to flee, the rest will take care of itself. If he consents not, they will capture him forcibly, and take him to Saint Denis."

"Good!"

"There they will find twenty thousand infantry, whereto will be added twelve hundred horsemen, the Brabant legion, the four hundred Swiss mercenaries, the three hundred confederates, besides ten, twenty, thirty thousand Royalists, gathered along the route; and in great force they will conduct the amiable King of the French to Péronne."

"Better and better! And at Péronne, what will be done, dear Beausire?"

"At Péronne they will find twenty thousand, who will arrive at about the same time from the Flanders shipping, from Picardy, from Artois, Champagne, Burgundy, Lorraine, Alsace, and Cambrésis. They are also bargaining for twenty thousand more Swiss hirelings, twelve thousand Germans, and twelve thousand Sardinians, which, added to the King's large escort, will form an effective force of fifty thousand men."

"A very pretty number!" said Cagliostro.

"Finally, with these fifty thousand men, they will march on Paris, take possession of the river Seine above and below the city, so as to cut off all supplies. Paris, being famished, will capitulate. The National Assembly

will be dissolved. The King will be replaced — a King in deed and in truth — on the throne of his fathers.”

“Amen !” said Cagliostro. Then he added, rising : “My dear Beausire, your conversation is very agreeable ; but it is with you, as with most great orators, — when you have said everything, you have nothing more to say ; and you have told the whole story, I believe ?”

“Yes, for the present !”

“Very well ! When you want ten more louis, — always as a *gift*, be it understood, — come and find me at my place, Bellevue.”

“At Bellevue ; and I shall ask for Monsieur Cagliostro ?”

“Cagliostro ? Oh no, they wouldn’t understand you. Ask for the Baron Zannone.”

“Baron Zannone ?” cried Beausire. “Why, that’s the name of the banker who has discounted two millions worth of paper for *Monsieur*.”

“Very possible !”

“How, *possible* ?”

“Yes ; only I do so much business, that one item may easily be confounded with others. That is why I did n’t at first recollect ; but I think I do recall the fact now.”

Beausire was in a state of stupefaction, in the presence of a man who could forget business involving two millions, and began to think, that even from a pecuniary point of view, it is better to be of service to the lender than the borrower.

As this stupefaction was not so deep as to make him forget where he was, at the sound of Cagliostro’s first move towards the gate, Beausire noted the action, and followed, with a step so closely modelled after his leader’s, that, seeing them march thus in single file, one after the other, one might mistake them for automaton, moved by the same spring. Only at the entrance, after the

grating was fastened, did the two appear to be wholly separate.

"Well," asked Cagliostro, "which way do you go?"

"And yourself?"

"In the direction which you do *not*."

"I am going to the Palace Royal, Monsieur."

"And I to the Bastille."

On this the two men separated, Beausire saluting the Count with deepest respect, and Cagliostro responding with a slight nod; and both disappeared, almost at the same time, in the midst of the obscurity, Cagliostro going towards the Rue Temple, and Beausire towards the Rue Verrerie.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

IN WHICH GAMAIN PROVES THAT HE IS TRULY MASTER OF
THE MASTER, MASTER OF ALL.

It may be remembered that the King expressed, in presence of Lafayette and young Louis de Bouillé, a desire to have near him his old teacher Gamain, to aid in an important bit of mechanism. He even added, — and it may be well to record this detail, — that an adroit apprentice would not be unwelcome to complete the mechanical triumvirate. This number three, which pleases the gods of good-luck, was happily not displeasing to Lafayette; and he consequently gave orders for the free access to the King of Master Gamain and his apprentice, and that they should be admitted to the forge whenever they presented themselves.

It was not therefore astonishing, several days after the conversation before reported, to see Master Gamain, — who is no stranger to our readers, as he was carefully pointed out on the morning of the Sixth of October, drinking a bottle of burgundy with an unknown gun-maker, in the tavern near Sevres Bridge, — it was not therefore astonishing, we repeat, a few days after the King's conversation with Lafayette, to see Gamain, accompanied by an apprentice, both clad in working-clothes, present themselves at the entrance of the Tuileries. After their admission, which was accorded without any difficulty, they walked around the royal apartments by way of the public corridors, ascended the staircase to the

attics, and gave their names and titles as follows, to the attendant on duty: Nicholas Claude Gamain, master locksmith; Louis Lecomte, apprentice.

Although there was nothing aristocratic in either of these names or titles, hardly were they announced when Louis Sixteenth ran to the door, exclaiming, "Come in!"

"Here we are!" said Gamain, entering, not merely with the familiarity of a guest, but as if he were at least the master.

Perhaps because he was less accustomed to intercourse with royalty, and naturally endowed with great respect for crowned heads, in whatever costume they appeared to him, or in whatever guise he appeared before them, — at any rate, for some reason, the apprentice, by not responding at once to the King's bidding, left a convenient interval between Gamain and himself, and so remained standing, his jacket on his arm and his cap in his hand, near the door, which the valet had closed behind them.

Perhaps it was easier from this point, than it would have been if he had stood side by side with Gamain, to catch the flash of joy which gleamed in the dull eye of the King, and respond thereto with a respectful inclination of the head.

"Ah, is it thou, my dear Gamain?" said the King. "I am right glad to see thee. Indeed, I did not expect thee, and believed thou hadst forgotten me."

"And that's why you took an apprentice! That's all right, seeing I was n't here; but unhappily," he added, with a sly gesture, "the apprentice is n't a master, hey?"

The apprentice made a sign to the King.

"What wouldst thou have, my poor Gamain?" asked the King. "I was assured thou wouldst never have

anything to do with me, — never again, — for fear of compromising thyself.”

“Faith, Sire, you must have been convinced, for yourself, at Versailles, that it went hard with your friends; and in the cabaret at Sevres Bridge I saw, with my own eyes, two heads frizzled by Monsieur Leonard himself, — two heads which grinned horribly, — of those two guardsmen who happened to be in your antechamber, when your good friends came from Paris to visit you.”

A cloud swept over the King’s face, and the apprentice lowered his head.

“But,” continued Gamain, “they say things are better since you came back to Paris, and that now you can do what you please with these Parisians. Oh, that’s not strange! Your Parisians are such asses, and the Queen is such a wheedler, when she chooses.”

Louis Sixteenth said nothing, but a faint blush reddened his cheeks.

As to the young man, he seemed greatly distressed by these familiarities on Gamain’s part. After wiping his forehead, with a handkerchief somewhat too fine for a locksmith’s apprentice, he came nearer and said: “Your Majesty will perhaps allow me to tell how it is that Master Gamain has the honor of seeing the face of your Majesty once more, and how I happen to be with him?”

“Yes, my dear Louis,” replied the King.

“Ah, there it is! *My dear Louis!* as large as life,” muttered Gamain. — “*My dear Louis!* — to an acquaintance of a fortnight, — to a workman, an apprentice. What do you call me, — me, who have known you five-and-twenty years, — me, who put the first file into your hand, — me, the master? That’s what it is to have a glib tongue and white hands!”

"I call thee, *My good Gamain*, and I call this youth, *My dear Louis*, not because he expresses himself more elegantly than thyself, not because he washes his hands oftener, — for I care little, as thou knowest, for these trifles, — but because he found a way of bringing thee here, my friend, when they told me thou wouldst refuse to see me again."

"Oh, it was n't *me* who would n't see you ; for as for me, — well, in spite of your faults, I rather like you, after all ; but it was my wife, Madame Gamain, who kept saying to me : 'Thou hast bad associates, Gamain, — associates too high for thee. It is not well to visit aristocrats in these days. We have n't much property, but let us guard it. We have children ; let us look out for them ! If the Dauphin wishes to learn lockmaking by-and-by, let him go to somebody else. There is no scarcity of locksmiths in France.' This is how she talked ; and even *you* know how women *can* talk !"

The King glanced at the apprentice, and said, stifling a sigh, half humorous and half piteous : "Undoubtedly there are plenty of locksmiths in France, but not another like thyself."

"That's what I told the master, Sire," interrupted the apprentice, "when I went to see him in your behalf. I told him the King was trying to make a secret lock, and needed the aid of a locksmith ; that the King heard of me, and sent for me ; that this was very flattering, and so far, so good ; but that it was fine work the King was about. The lock was well enough, so far as the partitions, the case, and the springs went, because everybody knows that three springs, dovetailed on to the flange, are enough to connect the partition solidly with the box ; but when it came to moving the bolt, then the workman was bothered."

"I believe you!" said Gamain. "The bolt is the very soul of the lock."

"And the masterpiece of lockmaking, when well done," said the apprentice; "but there are bolts and *bolts*. There is the sleeping-bolt; there is the lever-bolt, which moves with the half-turn; there is the nut-bolt, for moving the latch. Well, suppose now, for instance, that we have a bored key, which must be thrust through an aperture in the woodwork, with a shallow sinkage on one side, and a deeper sinkage on the other, requiring two wheels with a reversible catch inside, to be pushed from the outside, what sort of a bolt would be necessary for such a key? That's where we came to a standstill."

"The fact is, everybody can't do such a job as that," said Gamain.

"Precisely! That's why I went after you, Master Gamain. Whenever the King was bothered he would say to me, with a sigh: 'Oh, if Gamain were only here!' So at last I said to the King: 'Well, why not have him here, this famous Gamain, and let him finish the work;' but the King always answered: 'Useless, my poor Louis. Gamain has forgotten me!' — 'Forget his Majesty, a man to whom had been accorded the honor of working at his Majesty's side? Impossible!' — So I said to the King: 'I will go and find this master of masters, this master of all.' The King said: 'Go, but thou canst not bring him!' But I declared I *would* bring you, and so set forth. Ah, Sire, I did not know what a task I had undertaken, and with what sort of a man I had to deal. Why, when I went to him as an apprentice, he put me through an examination which was worse than that required for entering the School of Cadets. Well, never mind, I stayed there with him. The next day I ventured to tell him that I had come on your account. Well, I began to

think he would put me clean out of doors. He called me a spy. I tried to convince him that I was really sent by the King; but that counted for nothing. It was only when I declared that the King and I had begun together a piece of work we could not finish properly, that Master Gamain opened his ears to me; but even this did not decide him. He said it was a snare set by his enemies. It was only yesterday, when I handed him the twenty-five louis which your Majesty had given me for that purpose, that he at last said: 'Ah ha! That certainly does come from the King himself. Well, we'll go to-morrow, for whoso nothing risks shall nothing gain.' — All the evening I kept the master in good humor; and this morning I said to him: 'See, it's time to go!' I still had some difficulty with him, but at last he decided; so I tied his apron about him, put his staff in his hand, and urged him out of doors. We took the road to Paris, and here we are!"

"And you are welcome!" said the King, thanking the young man with a sidelong glance; for the apprentice had evidently taken as much pains with the matter, and especially with the manner of his recital, — which sounded almost as if it were read, — as Master Gamain might have done with a sermon by Bossuet or a speech by Fléchier.

"Now Gamain," added his Majesty, "as thou art forced here at last, let us lose no time."

"That's right!" said the locksmith, "for I promised Madame Gamain to be home to-night. Let's see this famous lock!"

The King placed in the master's hands a lock three-quarters made.

"Why didst thou tell me this was a hidden mortised lock?" said Gamain to his apprentice. "That sort of a lock fastens from two sides, stupid! This is only a closet-lock. Let's see a little about it! This don't work

very well, hey? Well, with Master Gamain, it'll *have* to work!" and he tried to turn the key. "Ah, there it is!"

"Thou hast found the defect, dear Gamain?"

"I should say so!"

"Well, show me!"

"That's quickly done! Look! The ward of the key catches the large ridge well enough, and the ridge describes a half circle; but then, as it is not bevelled off, the key finishes its twist all alone, and the spring falls back again. That's all! The play of the ridge being six lines, the shoulder should be one line wide." Both King and apprentice noted Gamain's science with wonder.

Encouraged by their tacit admiration he continued: "Good gracious, it's very simple. I don't see how you managed to forget it. You must have been mixed up with a heap of foolishness, since you saw me, which has spoilt your memory. You have three ridges, — have n't you? — one large and two small, — one five lines long, and the others only two lines."

"Undoubtedly," said the King, following Gamain's demonstration with some interest.

"Well, as soon as the key releases the large ridge, it should unfasten the bolt, which had been held in place, — should n't it?"

"Yes," said the King.

"Very well, on its second half-turn the key must catch the second ridge, the minute the first is released?"

"Yes, yes, yes!" said the King.

"Yes, yes, yes!" repeated Gamain, impertinently. "Well, how do you suppose this poor key can do that, if the space between the large and small ridges is not equal to the thickness of the wards of the key, and allows too much play?"

"Ah!"

"Ah!" repeated Gamain jeeringly, as before. "You are the fine great King of France, and say, *I will*. The little ridge says *I won't*; and so, good-night, lock! This is just the way you bicker with the Assembly, and the Assembly is the strongest."

"However, this lock may be cured, master, may it not?" asked the King.

"Great Heavens, there's always a remedy. It is only necessary to sharpen the first ridge a little, to enlarge the shoulder a trifle, to remove the first ridge a little farther from the second, and replace, at the same distance, the third ridge, — the one which makes part of the spur, and rests on the pin, — and there you are!"

"But it will take a day's work to make all these changes," said the King.

"Yes, for anybody else, — a day's labor; but for Gamain, two hours will suffice, — if he is let alone, and not bothered with remarks, — Gamain this, Gamain that! The forge appears to be well supplied with tools; and in two hours, if I'm let alone, — especially if the labor is comfortably moistened," — continued Gamain, smiling, "you may come back and find the agony all over."

What Gamain requested was exactly what the King desired. The locksmith's desire for solitude furnished the King an excuse for a *tête-à-tête* with the apprentice. However, the King pretended to raise objections.

"But if thou hast need of anything, my dear, good Gamain —?"

"If I need anything I will call the lackey, and provided he has orders to give me what I want, — well, that's all I need."

The King went himself to the door, saying as he opened it: "François, stay at your post! Here is Gamain, my old instructor in lockmaking, who is correcting a bad

piece of work. You will get him whatever he wants, and particularly one or two bottles of excellent bordeaux."

"If you would have the goodness to remember, Sire, I like burgundy much better!—To the Devil with your bordeaux. It's like drinking lukewarm water."

"Yes, yes, that's true! I forgot!" said the King, laughing. "We have clinked glasses many a time together, my poor Gamain. — Some burgundy, François, — you hear, some Volnay!"

"Good!" said Gamain, licking his chops, "I remember that name."

"And it makes thy mouth water?"

"Don't talk about water! Water? I don't see what use it is, unless for tempering iron. Those who use it for anything else turn it from its proper destination. Water? Pooh!"

"Well, be calm. While here, thou shalt hear nothing of water; and lest the word should escape one of us involuntarily, we will leave thee all alone. When we are wanted, send for us."

"And what are you going to do all this time?"

"See to the closet, for which this lock is intended."

"Well, that's the kind of work you're fit for. Good luck!"

"Good courage!" responded the King; and nodding his head familiarly to Gamain he went out with the apprentice, Louis Lecomte, or Count Louis, as the reader prefers, — the reader to whom we ascribe perspicacity enough to have recognized the son of the Marquis de Bouillé in the sham workman.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

IN WHICH SOMETHING BESIDES LOCKMAKING IS DISCUSSED.

THE King did not leave his workshop by the outside staircase, common to all the occupants of the palace, but by the private stairs reserved for himself. This stairway led directly into his study.

One table in this office was covered by an immense map of France, which showed that the King had already often considered what would be the shortest and easiest route out of his kingdom.

It was not, however, till they had reached the bottom of the staircase, and the door was fastened behind both himself and his companion, that Louis Sixteenth, after looking carefully about the room, appeared to recognize the person who followed, with his jacket over his shoulder and his cap in hand.

"At last," he said, "we are alone, my dear Count. First of all, let me congratulate you on your adroitness, and thank you for your devotion."

"As for me, Sire, let me apologize to his Majesty," said the young man, "for daring, even in his own service, to present myself, while clad in such a fashion, before the King, and for talking to him as I have."

"You have acted as a brave gentleman, my dear Louis, and however you may be clothed, a loyal heart always beats under your coat. But come, we have no time to lose. Everybody, even the Queen, is ignorant of your

presence here. Nobody is within hearing. Tell me quickly what has brought you."

"Your Majesty has done my father the honor of sending an officer to his house?"

"Yes, — Monsieur de Charny."

"Precisely, Charny. He brought a letter —?"

"An insignificant letter," interrupted the King, — "only to furnish him with an introduction for the delivery of a verbal message."

"This verbal mission he fulfilled; and it was to make its execution sure that I came to Paris, under orders from my father, and in the hope of speaking face to face with your Majesty."

"Then you have been informed of everything?"

"I know that the King wishes to have the power of leaving France, at any given moment."

"And that he relies upon the Marquis de Bouillé, as a man capable of seconding his project."

"And my father is both proud and grateful, because of the honor you have done him."

"But let us come to the principal point. What does he say of the project?" asked the King.

"That it is hazardous, that it demands the greatest precautions; but that it is not impossible."

"To begin with, in order that the co-operation of De Bouillé may be as efficacious as his loyalty and devotion promise, would it not be well to add several other provinces to his present jurisdiction at Metz, and especially the command of Franche Comté?"

"That is exactly the advice of my father, Sire; but I am glad the King is first to express his opinion on that point, for the Marquis feared lest the King should attribute such a desire to personal ambition."

"What? Am I not already well acquainted with the

disinterestedness of your father? But go on! Did he talk with you about the particulars?"

"Above all, Sire, my father dreaded one thing."

"What was that?"

"That if several plans of flight should be presented to your Majesty, one from Spain, one from the German Empire, one from the emigrés at Turin, and these projects should run counter to one another, that his own plan might prove abortive, through some of those fortuitous circumstances usually ascribed to Fate, which are almost always the result of imprudence or jealousy in the interested parties."

"My dear Louis, I promise you to let all the world carry on its intrigues about me, without my interference. In the first place, some parties need such experiments; and then, this is a necessity of my position. As long as the wit of Lafayette and the interest of the Assembly are drawn towards threads whose only purpose is to mislead, we can take our own way, with no other confidants than the persons strictly necessary for the accomplishment of our plans,—all of them persons on whom we can thoroughly rely,—and we can do this with as much security as privacy."

"That point being determined, Sire, here is what my father has the honor of proposing to your Majesty."

"Speak on!" said the King, bending over the map of France, in order to follow with his eyes the different routes which the young Count was about to explain.

"Sire, there are several places to which the King might retire."

"Undoubtedly!"

"Has the King made his choice?"

"Not entirely. I waited for the advice of the Marquis, and I presume you bring it."

The young man made a respectful and affirmative response with his head.

"Go on," said the King.

"In the first place, there is Besançon, whose citadel makes it a very strong position, and very advantageous for the collection of troops, and for summoning the Swiss soldiers to our aid. These Swiss, added to our forces, could advance through Burgundy, where Royalists are numerous, and thence march upon Paris."

The King shook his head, in a way which signified: "I should prefer something different."

The young man therefore resumed: "Then there is Valenciennes, or some other place in Flanders, with a secure garrison. Either before or after the King's arrival, my father would betake himself thither with the men under his immediate command."

Louis Sixteenth gave another nod, which seemed to say, "Something else, Monsieur!"

"The King might go by way of Ardennes and Austrian Flanders, and return by the same frontier, to some one of the places controlled by the Marquis, which he would surrender to the King's authority, and where troops could be gathered in advance."

"I will tell you presently why I must still ask if you have nothing better to propose."

"Lastly, the King might betake himself straight to Sedan or Montmédy. There, being at the centre of his command, the General would be able to obey the King's wishes, and assure him liberty of action, whether he should wish to leave France or to march against Paris."

"My dear Count," said the King, "in two words I will explain what makes me reject the first three propositions, and why I shall probably adopt the fourth. First, Besançon is too far off, and consequently I should run

too many chances of being arrested before reaching my destination. Next, Valenciennes is well enough as to distance, and would be agreeable to me also, because of the excellent spirit of that city ; but Rochambeau is in command of Hainault, — that is, at the very gates of Valenciennes, — and he is wholly given over to the democratic spirit. As to going by way of Ardennes and Austrian Flanders, and so appealing to Austria — *no* ! Apart from my dislike of Austria, who never meddles with French affairs without embroiling us somehow, — apart from this, Austria has enough to do just now, — what with the illness of the Emperor, my brother-in-law, the war with the Turks, and the revolt in Brabant, — without increasing her embarrassment by a rupture with France. Besides, I will not go out of France. Once outside his kingdom, a king knows not if he shall ever return. Consider Charles the Second and James the Second, of England. Charles did not go back till the end of thirteen years, and James, never ! — No, I prefer Montmédy. Montmédy is at a convenient distance, and is the centre of your father's jurisdiction. Tell the Marquis that my choice is so far made, and that it is to Montmédy I will retire."

The young Count ventured to ask : "Is the King resolved upon flight, or is it only a project as yet ?"

"My dear Louis, nothing is decided. All must depend upon circumstances. If I see that the Queen and my children are exposed to new perils, like those of that terrible night and day in early October, I shall make up my mind at once ; and tell your father that when the decision is once made, it will be irrevocable."

"Meanwhile, Sire, may I be permitted to submit to the King's judgment the advice of my father as to the details of the journey ?"

"Certainly! Speak on!"

"His opinion is, that we should diminish the dangers of the trip by dividing them."

"Explain yourself!"

"Your Majesty should go in one direction, with Madame Royale, your daughter, and with Madame Elizabeth, your sister; while the Queen should go another way, with Monseigneur the Dauphin, in order that —"

The King did not let the young man finish his sentence.

"It is useless to discuss that point, my dear Louis. In a very solemn moment we decided, the Queen and myself, that we would never separate. If your father can save us, we must be saved together, or not at all!"

The Count bowed and said: "When the right time comes the King has but to give his orders, and the royal orders will be executed; only I must be permitted to suggest to the King, that it will be difficult to procure a vehicle large enough for the accommodation of their Majesties, their august children, Madame Elizabeth, and the two or three attendants who ought to accompany them for the sake of comfort."

"Don't worry about that, my dear Louis. A carriage is being made on purpose. That contingency is provided for."

"One other thing, Sire! There are two roads to Montmédy. It only remains to ask which of these your Majesty would prefer, in order to have the matter looked into by a trustworthy expert."

"This trustworthy surveyor we already have, — in Charny, who is all devotion, and has already revised the maps of Chandernagor, with remarkable fidelity and skill. The fewer persons with whom we place our secret, the

better ; and we have in Charny an approved follower, intelligent and courageous, and will avail ourselves of his services. As to the route, you see that I have been thinking about that. As I had already selected Montmédy, the two routes which lead thither are marked on this map."

"There are three roads, Sire," answered the young man respectfully.

"Yes, I know. There is the one leading from Paris to Metz, which one must quit after passing Verdun, in order to take the road along the river Meuse, as far as Stenay, from which Montmédy is only three leagues distant."

"There is the route by way of Rheims, the Isle de France, Rethel, and Stenay," said the young Count, so vivaciously that the King could see that his interlocutor gave this plan the preference.

"Ah ! ah !" said the King, "it appears that you like that way best ?"

"Not I, Sire ! God forbid that I, little more than a boy, should take the responsibility of giving an opinion about so grave a matter. No, Sire, that is not my opinion, except as it is my father's ; but he based his judgment on the fact that this route lies through a district so poor as to be almost a desert, one wherein fewer precautions would therefore be needed. He added, that the best regiment in the army, the only one which is known to remain thoroughly faithful, — the Royal German, — is stationed at Stenay, and could be the King's escort beyond Rethel, thus avoiding the danger of too many military transfers."

"Yes," interrupted the King, "but we should have to go through Rheims, where I was crowned, and where the first comer would be sure to recognize me. No, my dear Count, on that point my decision is final."

The King pronounced these words in so firm a tone that Count Louis had no thought of combating this determination; so he asked: "The King has then chosen —?"

"— The route to Châlons, through Varennes, avoiding Verdun. As to the regiments, they can be gradually stationed in the small cities between Montmédy and Châlons. It would not be inconvenient, so far as I can see, if the first detachment should wait for me in the latter city."

"Sire, when the time comes, we can discuss in what city the regiments will incur the least risk; but the King is not aware of one thing, that there is no station for posthorses at Varennes."

"I'm glad to see you so well posted," said the king, laughing. "It proves that you have seriously meditated upon our venture. But do not be uneasy on that score. We shall find means for having posthorses on hand, either beyond the city or this side of it. Our surveyor will tell us which is best."

"Now that all is arranged," said the young Count, "will his Majesty authorize me to recite to him, in the name of my father, some lines from an Italian author, pertinent to the royal situation, — some lines he had me learn by heart, in order that I might repeat them here?"

"By all means, Monsieur!"

"Here they are, Sire: 'Delay is always dangerous, and circumstances are never entirely favorable to any undertaking; so that if we wait for the perfect time, we shall never undertake anything; or if we do, it will turn out badly.' Your Majesty will remember, it is the author who speaks."

"Ah yes, Monsieur, and that author is Machiavelli. I will not forget the counsel of the ambassador of the

Magnificent Republic, believe me! — But hush! I hear steps on the stairs. Gamain is coming down. Let us get in ahead of him, so that he will not notice that we have been occupied with anything but the closet.”

With these words the King opened the door of the private staircase. It was time, for the master locksmith was on the lower steps, with the lock in his hand.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

IN WHICH IT IS DEMONSTRATED THAT THERE IS TRULY A
PROVIDENCE FOR DRUNKARDS.

ON the same day, about eight o'clock in the evening, a man clad like a mechanic, — and pressing his waistcoat pocket, as if on this particular evening the pocket contained a considerably larger sum than is customary with a mechanic's pocket, — a man, we say, came out of the Tuileries, over the Swinging Bridge (which had not at that date been removed), turned to the left, and walked from one end to the other of the grand avenue of trees, which runs along the side of the Seine, forming that portion of the Champs Élysées formerly called the Marble Pier, or sometimes the Stone Pier, but now known as the Queen's Drive.

At the end of that avenue he found himself on what was then called the Quay of Soapworks, though this appellation has long since disappeared.

This quay, at that epoch, was very lively in the daytime, and well lighted in the evening by a crowd of booths, where, on Sunday, good citizens could buy the provisions, liquid and solid, which they wished to take with them on the freight-boats, which, at two sous a head, would land them on the Isle of Swans for a day's outing ; an island where, without this precaution, they would run the risk of being famished, — on week-days, because the place was utterly deserted, and on holidays and Sundays, because it was so thickly populated.

At the first wineshop he encountered on the way, this man, clothed like a mechanic, appeared to have a violent combat with himself, — a combat wherein he came off conqueror, — to decide whether he should or should not enter that wineshop.

He did not enter, but passed along.

At the second cabaret the temptation was renewed ; and this time another man, — who followed the first one like a shadow, but without being perceived, — evidently believed that the mechanic would succumb to the temptation ; inasmuch as he deviated from the straight line, and bent his steps towards that annex of the Temple of Bacchus, whose threshold he fairly grazed.

Nevertheless, temperance triumphed this time also. If a third wineshop had not put itself in his path, and he could not have broken the pledge (which he had apparently made to himself) without retracing his steps, it is probable he would have continued soberly on his way, — not indeed fasting, for our traveller had already taken a square dose of that liquor which rejoices the heart of man, but in that state of self-control which would allow his head to keep his legs in a reasonably straight course in the journey before him.

Unluckily there was not only a third, but even a tenth, — yes, and a twentieth wineshop on the way. The temptation being too often renewed, and the resisting force finding itself unequal to the power of the temptation, the result was that he yielded on the third trial.

It is but fair to say that by a sort of bargain with himself, at the very entrance of the wineshop, the mechanic (who had so far happily and successfully fought the demon of wine) remained standing at the counter, and asked for only a pint.

Meanwhile the wine-devil, against whom he had struggled so victoriously heretofore, seemed to be typified by the Unknown who followed at a distance, taking care to keep always in the obscurity ; but who, though remaining out of sight, was none the less vigilant.

Doubtless it was to enjoy the perspective, which seemed to be so very agreeable to him, that he seated himself on the parapet, just opposite the sign of the bush over the door where the mechanic was drinking his pint ; but he resumed his travels five minutes later, when the mechanic, having finished his drink, crossed the threshold of the door, and took his line of march.

But who can say where the lips will stop when once they have drunk from the fatal cup of intoxication, and they perceive, with that mingled astonishment and satisfaction peculiar to tipplers, that nothing excites thirst like drinking. Hardly had the mechanic gone a hundred paces than his thirst was such that he felt obliged to again pause and quench it ; only this time he understood that a pint was not enough, and so he asked for a half-bottle.

The shadow, which seemed to belong to him, did not appear to feel displeased with these delays, which the need of refreshment occasioned in the course of the journey. He stopped in the angle of the cabaret, and while the drinker was seated, in order to be more at his ease, and took a full quarter-hour for sipping his half-bottle, the good-natured shadow manifested no impatience, but contented himself, when the drinker came out, by following at the same distance as before.

At the end of the next hundred paces his forbearance was put to a new and harder proof. The workman made a third halt, and this time his thirst had become so augmented that he demanded an entire bottle.

This meant a half-hour for the patient Argus who dogged his steps.

Probably these five, fifteen, and thirty minutes, successively lost, roused some remorse in the heart of the tippler; for not wishing to delay any longer, but yet desiring to continue his refreshment, he apparently made another bargain with conscience, which ended in his providing himself, on his departure, with another bottle, already uncorked, which he resolved to take along as a travelling-companion.

This was a wise resolution, and one which did not retard him much, except for the curves, more and more extended, and the zigzags, more and more frequent, which were the result of each contact of the neck of the bottle with the thirsty lips of the tippler.

In one of these curves, adroitly swung, he crossed the Passy Barrier, without disturbing anybody, — for liquors, as we know, were free from excise duty, when they were taken away from the capital, though not when they were brought into it from the country beyond.

The Unkuown passed through behind him, and with the same success.

A hundred paces beyond the barrier our man felicitated himself over his innocent precaution; for from that point the wineshops became few and far between, till at last they disappeared altogether; but what mattered it to our philosopher? Like a classic sage, he carried with him not only his fortune, but his happiness.

We say his happiness, because, when the bottle was about half empty, the tippler began to sing; and nobody has ever contested the fact that singing, like laughing, is one of the methods by which man expresses his joy.

His shadow appeared duly sensible of the harmony of the tippler's song, for he hummed the air after him; and

the expression of joy, with which he followed the tippler's movements, evinced some special interest.

Unfortunately the joy was ephemeral and the song very short. The joy only lasted as long as there was wine in the bottle; and the bottle being empty, and several times fruitlessly squeezed between the tippler's hands, the singing changed to growling, which grew more and more emphatic, till at last the growls expanded into oaths, and the oaths into imprecations.

These imprecations were addressed to some unseen persecutors, of whom our traveller complained as he staggered along.

"Wretches!" he said, "wretches! to give an old friend, — and a master, too, — such doctored wine! Ugh! Well, when he sends for me again to patch up his old locks, when he sends after me by that traitor of a comrade who abandons me, I will say to him: 'Good-day, Sire, but thy M-m-majesty may patch up his locks himself.' Then he'll see if — if — if a lock can be m-made as easily as a m-m-manifesto! Ah, I'll give thee a lock with three ridges. — I'll g-g-give thee a b-bolt with three t-t-tumblers. Oh yes, — I'll give thee — bored keys and side h-handles — notched — notch — Oh you wretches! decidedly they've poisoned me."

As he uttered these words the unfortunate victim, doubtless vanquished by this poison, fell at full length, for the third time, on the road, softly spread with a thick covering of mud.

Twice our man was able to get up alone. The operation was indeed difficult, but he finally accomplished it creditably. The third time, after desperate efforts, he felt obliged to own that the task was beyond his strength; and, with a sigh which resembled a groan, he apparently

decided to take for his couch that night the breast of our common mother, the earth.

It was apparently for this point of discouragement and feebleness that the Unknown waited, who had followed him from Louis Fifteenth Square with so much perseverance; for after watching, from a distance, the ineffectual efforts which we have tried to depict, he approached the man very cautiously, made a detour around his fallen grandeur, and then hailed a passing cab.

"Hold on, friend!" he said to the driver. "My companion here has been taken sick. Take this crown of six livres, put the poor devil inside the carriage, and take him to the tavern at Sevres Bridge. I will ride aloft with you."

There was nothing surprising to the coachman in this proposition, that one of the two companions should remain with him and share his seat, especially as they appeared to be common sort of men; so with that touching confidence which men of that condition repose in one another, he said: "Six francs? And where are the six francs?"

"Here they are, my friend!" replied the man who had made the offer, giving the crown to the driver, and without appearing offended the least in the world.

"And when we are there, goodman," said the coachman, softened by the sight of the royal head on the coin, "there will be not even a trifle for drink-money?"

"That depends upon how we get on. Put this poor devil in thy cab, shut the windows carefully, try to keep thy two plugs on their four legs, and when we reach Sevres Bridge, — well, we shall see. According to *thy* conduct will be *mine*."

"All right! Money talks. Be easy, goodman. I know what's what! Climb into my seat, and don't let

those young turkeys get foolish. Gracious, at this hour they smell the stable, and are anxious to get there again. I 'll see to the rest."

The generous Unknown, without another word, followed the instruction given him ; and on his side the driver, with all the delicacy whereof he was capable, lifted the drunkard in his arms, laid him softly between the seats of his cab, closed the door, remounted his seat, where he found the Unknown already established, turned his team about, whipped his horses, who jogged along at that melancholy pace common with these unfortunate quadrupeds, speedily passed through the village called Daybreak, and at the expiration of an hour's ride, reached the cabaret near the Sevres Bridge.

After ten minutes spent in unloading our belated citizen Gamain, — whom the reader of course long ago recognized, — we once more find the worthy master of the master, and master of all, seated at the same table, and face to face with the same gunmaker, as we saw him in the first chapter of this history.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

WHAT IS CALLED CHANCE.

MEANWHILE, how was this unloading managed, and how did Master Gamain emerge from that almost cataleptic state, wherein we left him, into the nearly normal condition, wherein we now find him?

The landlord of the inn at Sevres Bridge was abed, and not the faintest streak of light filtered through the chinks of his outside shutters, when the first blows of the fist of our philanthropist, who had rescued Master Gamain, resounded at the door. These blows of the fist were administered in a fashion that did not allow the occupants of the house to long believe themselves able to enjoy repose in the face of such an attack, however given over to sleep they might be.

Very sleepily, very clumsily, and very fractiously, the innkeeper himself came to open the door for the disturbers of his slumbers, promising himself to administer a rebuke worthy of the occasion, — if, as he said to himself, the game should not prove worth the candle.

It appeared that the game *was* worth the candle; for at the first word whispered to mine host, by the man who had knocked so loudly, the innkeeper doffed his cotton nightcap, making certain salutes which his costume rendered singularly grotesque, and at once introduced Gamain and his conductor into the little apartment, where we formerly saw the locksmith discussing a bottle of burgundy, his favorite liquor; though this time, from

having tested his wine too roundly, Master Gamain was nearly insensible.

As the coachman and his horses had done their best, one with his whip and the others with their legs, the Unknown began by discharging his debt to them, — adding a coin of twenty-four sous, by way of drink-money, to the six francs already paid.

Then, seeing Master Gamain seated squarely on a chair, — his head leaning against the wall, with a table in front of him, — the Unknown bade the landlord hasten to bring two bottles of wine and a decanter of water, and himself threw open the casements and blinds, in order to change the mephitic air which filled the room.

Under any other circumstances this action would have compromised his incognito; for every observer knows, that while there are people, of a certain class, who need to respire the atmosphere in its natural condition, — that is, air composed of seventy parts of oxygen, twenty-one of nitrogen, and two of water, — there are nevertheless hosts of ordinary people, accustomed to unventilated habitations, who breathe the air without any difficulty whatsoever, even if it is charged with carbon or nitrogen.

Fortunately nobody was there to take note of his actions. The landlord, after having brought with alacrity two bottles of wine, and, more slowly, a decanter of water, respectfully withdrew himself, and left the Unknown alone with Master Gamain.

First of all, as we know, the Unknown took care to change the air. Then, before the window was closed, he placed a vial of salts to the sniffing and dilated nostrils of Master Locksmith, who was now involved in disgusting drunken slumber, — a slumber which would surely cure tipplers of their love of wine, if, by the miraculous power

of the Most High, they could once behold themselves asleep.

As he inhaled the penetrating odor of the liquid contained in the vial, Master Gamain opened his eyes very wide, and immediately began to sneeze furiously. Then he uttered some words, unintelligible to almost anybody except some expert philologist, like him who now listened with profound attention, and managed to catch these three or four words: "The wretch! She's poisoned me — poisoned! —"

The gunsmith saw with satisfaction that Master Gamain was still under the dominance of the same idea, and again he put the vial to the drunkard's nostrils. This restored the worthy son of Noah sufficiently for him to complete the sense of his phrase, and add thereto a few last words, containing an accusation all the more terrible, because it denoted abuse of confidence and want of heart.

"Poison a friend! — a friend!" he said.

"That is indeed horrible!" observed the gunsmith.

"Horrible!" babbled Gamain.

"Infamous!" replied Number One.

"Infamous!" echoed Number Two.

"Luckily I was on hand," said the gunsmith, "to administer an antidote."

"Lucky indeed!" muttered Gamain.

"Lest the first dose may not be sufficient to counteract such a poisoning, better take another!" said the Unknown; as into half a glass of water he put five or six drops of liquid from his flacon, — which contained nothing more nor less than some strong diluted harts-horn, or ammonia.

He placed the glass to Gamain's lips. "Ah," stammered the latter, "that's to be drunk with the mouth!"

I like that better than by the nose ;” and he thirstily drank the entire contents of the goblet.

Hardly had he swallowed this diabolical liquor, when he stretched his eyes to their utmost capacity, and cried, between two sneezes : “ Ah, you rascal, what have you given me ? — Pouah ! Pouah ! ”

“ My dear fellow,” responded the Unknown, “ I have only given you some liquor, which may save your life.”

“ Well, if ’t saves my life, you do right to give it to me ; but if you call that *liquor*, you ’re wrong ;” whereupon he began to sneeze again, pursing his mouth and opening his eyes to their fullest extent, like a classic mask of Tragedy.

The Unknown profited by this pantomimic movement, to go and close, not the window, but the outside shutters.

Gamain opened his eyes for the third or fourth time. In the midst of his convulsive movements he looked about him ; and, with that ready recollection which tipplers cherish of wineshop walls, he recognized this as one of his familiar resorts.

Indeed, on his frequent trips to Paris, which his trade necessitated, it was seldom that Gamain did not stop at the Sevres Bridge Inn. From one point of view, this halt was necessary as well as very agreeable, the wineshop in question being practically the half-way tavern between Versailles and the capital.

This recognition produced a good effect. It inspired Master Locksmith with confidence, and proved that he was in a friendly country.

“ Ah ha ! It appears that I have already finished half my journey.”

“ Yes, thanks to me ! ” said the gunsmith.

“ How, *thanks to you ?* ” stammered Master Gamain,

transferring his interest from inanimate to animate objects. "*Thanks to you? Who are you, pray?*"

"My dear Monsieur Gamain," said the Unknown, "that question proves you have a very short memory."

Gamain looked at his interlocutor with more attention than at first. "Hold on, hold on!" he said. "It seems to me that I've seen you before."

"Truly? Well, that's pleasant!"

"Yes, yes, yes! But when and where? That's the thing!"

"*Where?* Look about you! Perhaps something will strike your eye and refresh your memory. — *When?* That's another thing. Perhaps we must try another dose of the antidote, to help you tell me that."

"No, thanks," said Gamain, putting up his hand; "I've had enough of your antidote! If I'm nearly saved, I'll stop right here. — Where have I seen you? — Where have I seen you? — Dear me, it was *here!*"

"Right, so far!"

"*When* did I see you? — Hold on! It was the day when I came back from a job in Paris, — secret! It seems that I'm lucky in such enterprises," added Gamain, laughing.

"Very well! Now who am I?"

"Who are you? You're the man who paid the drinks, and consequently a good feller. Put it there!"

"With much pleasure!" said the Unknown; "Master Locksmith and Master Gunsmith must certainly shake hands."

"Ah, good, good! Now I remember! Yes, it was that Sixth of October, when the King returned to Paris. Why, we were talking about him that time!"

"And I found your conversation very interesting, Master Gamain; and this makes me glad to enjoy it again."

When your memory comes back, I wish to ask you to tell me, if it is not indiscreet, what you were doing an hour ago, stretched at full length across the roadway, and only twenty paces from a freight-wagon, — which might have cut you in two, if I had n't interfered. Were you blue, Master Gamain, and had you taken a fatal resolve to commit suicide?"

"Me? Suicide? Me? Well, I guess not! What was I doing in the middle of the road, — abed in the dirt? Are you sure it was so?"

"Look at yourself!"

Gamain threw an eye over his clothes and said: "Oh ho! Madame Gamain will make a fuss! 'Don't put on thy new clothes. Wear the old blouse! That's good enough for the Tuileries!' — That's what she said to me yesterday."

"How? To go to the Tuileries?" said the Unknown. "You were coming from the Tuileries when I met you?"

Gamain scratched his head, trying to recall his scattered senses.

"Yes, yes. There's it! Certainly I came from the Tuileries. Why not? It was no secret that I was once the teacher of Monsieur Veto."

"How, Monsieur Veto? Whom do you call Monsieur Veto?"

"Well, well! And you did n't know they called the King that? Well, well, where've you been? In China?"

"What can you expect? I attend to my trade, and don't bother my head with politics."

"You're lucky! I *do* attend to politics; that is, my trade makes me do it. There's what ruins me!" and Gamain lifted his eyes piously to the ceiling, and sighed.

"Bah! Were you summoned to Paris for another piece of work, of the same sort you had been doing there the first time I saw you?"

"Precisely! Only, then I did n't know where I went, with my bandaged eyes; but this time, I knew where I was, and kept my eyes open."

"So that you had no difficulty in recognizing the Tuileries?"

"The Tuileries? Who told you I went to the Tuileries?"

"Why, *you* did, just now! How should I know you went to the Tuileries, if you had n't told me?"

"Sure enough," said Gamain to himself. "How should he know it, if I had n't told him?" Then, looking at the Unknown, he added: "Perhaps I did wrong to tell you that; but then, my faith, you're not everybody, — you! Well, so I told you that? Well, I won't go back on it! I *did* go to the Tuileries."

"And you worked with the King, who gave you the twenty-five louis you have in your pocket."

"Hey? Well, yes, I *had* twenty-five louis in my pocket."

"And have them still, my friend!"

Gamain thrust his hand quickly into the depths of his waistcoat, and drew out a handful of gold, mixed with silver money and a few big copper sous. "Hold on!" he said, "hold on! Five, six, seven! — Good! And I'd forgotten all about it! — Twelve, thirteen, fourteen! — Twenty-five louis is quite a sum! — Seventeen, eighteen, nineteen! — A sum, as times go, one don't pick up under his horse's hoofs! — Twenty-three, twenty-four, twenty-five! — Ah! Thank God they're all here!" and Gamain breathed more freely.

"When I told you so, you seemed to doubt me."

"You? How should you know I had twenty-five louis about me?"

"My dear Monsieur Gamain, I have already had the honor of telling you that I found you lying right in the middle of the highway, only twenty steps ahead of a wagon, which was likely to run straight over you. I called out to the teamster to stop. I then called a passing cab. One of its lanterns I took, and by its light I discovered two or three goldpieces rolling on the ground. As these louis were near the mouth of your pocket, I guessed they had fallen out of it. I put in my hand, and by the score of other louis it contained, I found I was not mistaken. Then the coachman shook his head, and said: 'No, Monsieur, no!'—'What do you mean by *no*?'—'No, I can't take that man!'—'And why not take him?'—'Because he's too rich for his dress. Twenty-five gold louis in the pocket of a cotton velvet waistcoat! You can smell the gibbet a league off!'—'How,' said I, 'you believe him a thief?'—Doubtless the word roused *you*.—'*Thief*, me a thief?' said you.—'Undoubtedly a thief!' replied the cabman. 'If you're not a thief, how do you happen to have so many goldpieces in your pocket?'—To which you replied: 'I have twenty-five louis in my pocket, because my pupil, the King of France, gave them to me.'—At these words I thought I remembered you. I held the lantern nearer your face, and said: 'Ah, all is explained. This is Monsieur Gamain, a locksmith from Versailles. He has been at work with the King, and the King has given him twenty-five louis for his pains. I'll be responsible for him.'—After that the driver made no further objections. I replaced the louis in your pocket. You were properly laid in the cab. Then I mounted the box. We dismounted at this tavern, and, thanks to God, there is

nothing for you to complain of, except that your apprentice abandoned you."

"Did I talk about an apprentice? Me, — complain of his leaving me?" cried the bewildered Gamain, more and more astonished.

"Well, now, — here 's a fellow for you, — who can't remember what he says!"

"Me?"

"Why, yes! Did n't you say, a moment ago, 'It's all the fault of that stupid —' Well, I forget what you called him —"

"Louis Lecomte?"

"That's it! You said: 'It's all the fault of that stupid Louis Lecomte, who promised to go back with me to Versailles, and who, up to the moment when we parted, fairly scorched me with his politeness.' — That's what you said."

"The fact is, I might well have said so, for it is the truth."

"Well, then, if it's true, why do you deny it? Don't you know that all these evasions would be dangerous for you in such times as these, — with any other man except myself."

"Yes, but with *you*, —" said Gamain, fawningly.

"With *me*! What do you mean?"

"That is to say, with a *friend*."

"Ah yes! Great confidence you manifest towards your friend! First you say *yes*, and then you say *no*. First you say a thing is true, and the next minute you say it is n't true. Here, the other day, you told me a story, on your word of honor. Psha! Tell that story to the marines!"

"What story?"

"The story of a secret door you had arranged, in the

house of some great lord, whose address and name you could n't even tell me!"

"Well, you can believe me or not, as you choose; but this time it was another door."

"For the King?"

"For the King. Only, instead of a door on a stairway, it was the door of a closet."

"And you expect me to believe that the King, himself an adept in lockmaking, would send for you to put a lock on a door? Oh, come off!"

"Well, it's just so! Poor man! To be sure he believed himself able to get on without me. He began his lock. Well, then, — oh Lord! — 'What's the use of Gamain? Can't we get on without Gamain? Why send for Gamain?' — Oh yes! but he got muddled with those bolts and ridges, and had to send after poor Gamain, after all!"

"So he sent after you by some confidential attendant, — Weber, or Durey, or Hue?"

"That's where you're mistaken! He had taken a helper, a companion who knew less about it than himself. Well, one fine morning this companion came to Versailles, and said to me: 'See here, Father Gamain. We have been trying to make a lock, the King and me; but good-night, lock. It won't work.' — 'Well, what do you want of me?' says I. — 'That you shall come to Paris, and put it into shape,' says he. — Says I: 'That's a humbug! You don't come from the King. You want to get me into a trap!' — Says he: 'That's all right; so the King has commissioned me to give you twenty-five louis, in order that you sha'n't be in doubt about it.' — 'Twenty-five louis,' says I; 'where are they?' — 'Here they are!' says he; and sure enough, there they were, and he gave them to me."

"And these are the twenty-five louis you have with you?" asked the gunsmith.

"No! These here are another lot. The twenty-five first ones were only on account."

"Pish! Fifty goldpieces for touching up a lock? There must be some fraud underneath all that, Master Gamain!"

"That's just what I said to myself. Besides, you see that his companion —"

"Well, — his companion!"

"Well, he had the look of a sham. I'd ought to've questioned him about the details of his journeyman's tour through France, and what the mother of us all calls herself."

"But you're not a man to be cheated, when you see an apprentice at his work."

"I don't say he can't work. This feller handled his file and chisel well enough. I saw him cut off a hot iron bar at one blow, bore an eyelet with a rat-tail, as well as if he'd had a gimlet and a lathe. But you see there was, in all this, more theory than practice. No sooner'd he finished a bit of work, than he washed his hands; when he washed 'em, they came out white. Do the hands of a genuine locksmith bleach out like that? Bah, I can't wash *mine* out so!" and Gamain proudly displayed his black and callous hands, which seemed able to defy all the almond paste and soaps on earth.

"But," said the Unknown, recurring to the point which seemed to him most interesting, — "once at the King's, what did you do?"

"Well, it appeared that we were expected. They took us to the workshop. The King showed me a lock, not badly begun; but he had come to grief over the ridges. A lock with three ridges, you see! Well, there ain't

many *locksmiths* capable of making one, — much less *kings*, — you understand. I looked at it, and saw what was the matter with it; so, says I: ‘Good! Let me alone for an hour, and by that time the lock ’ll be all right on its pins.’ — Says the King: ‘All right, my friend, thou ’rt at home here. There are the files and the pincers. Work, my boy, work,’ says he; ‘and as for us, we ’ll go and get the closet ready.’ — Then he went out, along with his devilish comrade.”

“By the broad stairway?” carelessly asked Master Gunsmith.

“No, by the small private staircase, which leads directly into his office. — Well, when I’d done my job, says I to myself: ‘That there closet ’s a blind! Them two are shut up there together, to concoct some plot or ’nother. I ’ll go downstairs very soft. I ’ll open the door into the office, — whew, — and then I ’ll see what they ’re up to,’ says I.”

“And what were they doing?”

“Doing? Listening, probably! Me? I hain’t got the foot of a ballet-master, you understand. I tried to make my tread light as possible; but the stairway creaked under my heels, and I was heard. They made believe just coming after me. The minute I put my hand on the knob, — crick! the door opened! — Who got left? Gamain.”

“So you learned nothing?”

“Wait a bit! — ‘Ah ha, Gamain, is ’t thou?’ says the King. — ‘Yes, Sire,’ says I, ‘I ’m done.’ — ‘And we too,’ says he, ‘we’re done. Come on, I’ve another job for thee;’ and he led me rapidly through his study, but not so rapidly but I could see, spread out on the table, a large map, which I know was a map of France, for on one corner of it were the three lilies of the kingdom.”

"And you noticed nothing peculiar about that map of France?"

"Oh yes, — three long lines of pins stuck into it. They started from the centre, and ran toward the side of the map, about equal distances apart. You might 'a thought 'em soldiers, marching to the frontier by three different routes."

"Indeed, my dear Gamain," said the Unknown, laughing his appreciation, "you have a perspicacity which nothing escapes. So you think that instead of bothering about that closet, the King and your companion had been studying that big map?"

"Sure on 't!"

"You can't be *sure* of it!"

"But I *am*, though!"

"How so?"

"It's very simple. The pins had wax heads, — some black, some blue, and others red; and the King thoughtlessly picked his teeth with a red-headed pin, which he happened to have left in his hand."

"Ah Gamain, my friend," said the Unknown, "when I invent something new in gunmaking, I shall not invite you into my cabinet, nor even let you pass through it, — I can assure you of that; unless your eyes are bandaged, as they were the day you were summoned to the grand seigneur's mansion; yet even so, you discovered there were ten main steps, and that the house looked out upon the boulevards."

"Hold on," said Gamain, enchanted with these compliments, "we're not through yet. There was really a closet!"

"Ah ha! Where was it?"

"Ah yes, where? Guess a little. — Buried in the wall, my friend."

"In which wall?"

"In the wall of the interior passage-way, which connects the King's alcove with the Dauphin's chamber."

"Do you know this is very curious, what you tell me? And that closet is in plain sight?"

"I should say so! — Not much, Monsieur. I looked about with all my eyes, and could see nothing; so I says: 'Where is your closet?' — The King glances about; and says he: 'Gamain, I've always put confidence in thee; and I should n't want anybody else to know this secret. See here!' As he spoke these words, and the 'prentice held the light for us, — for there's no daylight in that passage-way, — the King moved a panel of the wainscot, and I saw a round hole, two feet in diameter, at its entrance, — or a little more. Seeing my surprise, says he: 'My friend,' and he winked at the apprentice as he spoke, 'thou seest that hole? I've had it made to keep my money in. This young man helped me during the four or five days he spent in the palace. But it is necessary to put a lock on its iron door; and it must be hidden in such a way that when the panel is replaced it will conceal everything. If help is needed, here is this youngster. He will help. Don't want him, hey? Then I'll keep him busy elsewhere, but always in *my* service?' — 'Oh,' says I, 'you know very well, that when I can do a job alone, I ask nobody's help. Here are four hours' work for a workman; but I'm a master, and I'll do it in three. Go about your own affairs, youngster; and you can attend to yours also, Sire,' says I, 'and if you have anything to lock up in that hole, come back in three hours.' — It must be so, because the King said so, — that our companion went to do some work somewhere else, — for I have n't seen him since. The King returned alone at the end of the three hours, and says: 'Well, Gamain,

where are we?' — 'Done, Sire!' says I; and I let him see the door — which moved as if it enjoyed moving, without the least creak — and the lock, which worked as smooth as one of Vaucanson's automaton. — 'Good enough!' says the King. 'Now, Gamain, thou wilt help me count the money I wish to put away.' Four bags of double louis were brought in by a valet; and says the King, says he: 'Now let's count 'em!' I accounted for one million, and he for another. There were twenty-five left over, miscounted somehow. — 'Here, Gamain,' says the King, 'these twenty-five louis are for thy pains!' as if it were not a shame to make a man count a million louis, — a poor man with five young ones, — and give him only twenty-five for a recompense! — Say, what do *you* think?"

The Unknown made a motion with his lips. "The fact is, it's shabby," he said presently; but it may be an open question, to whom he applied the epithet.

"Hold on! That ain't all! I took the twenty-five louis, put 'em into my pocket, and says I: 'Thanks, Sire; but for all that, I have n't ate or drunk since the forenoon, and I'm direfully thirsty.' I had hardly said this, when the Queen came in through a concealed door, so that all in a minute, before you could say *boo*, there she was, in front of me. She held a napkin in her hand, on which I could see a glass of wine and a cake. — 'My dear Gamain,' says she to me, 'you're thirsty. Try a glass of wine. You're hungry. Have a cake.' — 'Ah, Madame Queen,' says I to her, bowing, 'no need to trouble yourself on my account. It ain't worth while.' — Now then, Monsieur Gunsmith, what do you think of that? One glass of wine, for a man who says he's thirsty, and one cake, for a man who declares himself famished. What was that Queen thinking about? One

can easily see that *she* was never hungry or thirsty. — A glass of wine! Why, it's stingy!"

"Then you refused it?"

"I should 'a done better to refuse it! No! I drinks it! As to the cake, I twists it up in my handkerchief, and I says: 'What is n't good for the father may be good for his children.' Then I thanked my lady for her pains, and put myself on the road for home, swearing I'd never go to the Tuileries again."

"Why do you say you should have done better to refuse the wine?"

"Because they must have put poison in it! Hardly had I crossed the Swing Bridge than I was thirsty again, — and such a thirst! It was right there where the river runs along on the left, and the wineshops were at my right. — Ah, it was there I found out the bad quality of the wine they'd given me. The more I drank, the thirstier I grew. Things went on like that till I lost consciousness. One thing they may be easy about. If ever I'm called to testify against them, I will say that the King and Queen gave me twenty-five louis, for working four hours and counting a million of money; and then, for fear I should tell where they'd hid their treasure, they poisoned me like a dog."

This was in fact the very accusation (so it is recorded in history!) which this miserable fellow subsequently made against the Queen, in the presence of the Convention.

"And I can back up your testimony, dear Gamain," said the gunsmith, rising, "by saying that it was I who furnished you with the antidote, thanks to which you have been recalled to life."

"Henceforth it is friendship in life and death between us two," said Gamain, taking the hands of the Unknown in his own.

Refusing for the third or fourth time, with almost Spartan firmness, the wine which the Unknown offered him (for the ammonia had the double effect of sobering him instantly, and disgusting him with wine for twenty-four hours), Gamain, after swearing eternal friendship, resumed his journey to Versailles, which he reached safe and sound, at two in the morning, with the King's twenty-five goldpieces secure in his vest, and the Queen's cake in his coat-pocket.

Lingering later in the cabaret, the sham gunsmith drew from his pocket some tortoise-shell tablets, encrusted with gold, and therein wrote with a pencil this brace of notes :

Behind the King's alcove, in the dark corridor leading to the Dauphin's chamber, an iron closet.

See if this Louis Lecomte, a locksmith's helper, is not simply Count Louis (son of the Marquis de Bouillé), who came from Metz eleven days ago.

CHAPTER XL

DOCTOR GUILLOTIN'S MACHINE.

By the second day afterwards, thanks to the wires (controlled by Cagliostro) among all classes of society, reaching even to the royal household, he knew that the young Count Louis had arrived in Paris in the middle of November; that his presence had been discovered by his cousin Lafayette three days later; that he had been presented to the King on that day; that he had offered his services as a workman to Gamain on the Twenty-second of November; that he remained with him three days; that on the fourth day he went from Versailles to Paris with his master; that they were introduced at once to the King's presence; that young Louis returned afterwards to his lodgings, in the apartments of his friend Achille du Chastelet; that he then changed his costume immediately, and departed the same evening for Metz, posthaste.

The day after Cagliostro's conference with Beausire in Saint John Cemetery, the ex-soldier, much excited, hastened to the banker Zannone's residence at Bellevue.

Returning from the gaming-house at seven o'clock in the morning, after losing his last louis, — despite Law's infallible combination and sequence, — Master Beausire had found his rooms entirely empty, Mademoiselle Olivia and the young Toussaint having disappeared.

Then it came into his mind that Cagliostro had refused to leave the house with him the evening before, because

he had something confidential to say to Olivia. Here was a way open for suspicion. Olivia had certainly been led astray by the Count. A good bloodhound, Beausire put his nose to the ground, and followed the scent as far as Bellevue.

On giving his name, he was at once received by the Baron Zannone, or Count Cagliostro, — whichever the reader, for the moment, pleases to call the principal personage, the kingpin, of the drama which we have undertaken to recount.

Conducted into the same parlor wherewith we became acquainted at the beginning of this narrative, — when Doctor Gilbert and Favras met each other, — Beausire hesitated on finding himself face to face with the Count. Cagliostro appeared such a mighty lord, that Beausire hardly dared reclaim his mistress from him ; but as if he could read the heart of the ex-soldier, the Count said : “ I have noted one thing, that you have only two passions in this world, gambling and Mademoiselle Olivia.”

“ Ah ! ” cried Beausire, “ you know what brings me here ? ”

“ Perfectly well ! You come to demand Olivia. — She is at my house.”

“ How, she’s with you ? ”

“ Yes, in my house in the Rue Saint Claude. She occupies her old apartment there ; and if you’re careful, and I’m pleased with your behavior, — if you bring me news to interest and amuse me, — at such times I shall give you twenty-five louis for your pocket, wherewith you can visit the gamesters at the Palace Royal, and also buy a coat for your back, in order to visit your mistress in the Rue Saint Claude.”

Beausire had a great mind to raise his voice, and demand Olivia ; but Cagliostro said two words about that

miserable affair connected with the Portuguese embassy, — which was always suspended over the ex-soldier's head, like the sword of Damocles, — and Beausire held his peace.

As Beausire manifested some doubt whether Olivia was really at the mansion in the Rue Saint Claude, the Count ordered his carriage, took Beausire with him to that house on the boulevards, and introduced him into the *sanctum sanctorum*, the Holy of Holies. There, by displacing a picture, he allowed Beausire to see, through a skilfully contrived aperture, Mademoiselle Olivia, established like a queen. Seated on a huge sofa, she was reading one of those naughty books so common at that epoch, and which constituted the joy of her life, whenever the former chambermaid of Mademoiselle de Taverney was happy enough to light upon them. Her son Toussaint was attired like the son of a king, with a Henry Fourth hat, caught up with white feathers, and a sky-blue sailor suit, kept in place by a tricolored belt, fringed with gold. He was enjoying some beautiful playthings.

Then Beausire's heart dilated, as a lover and father. He promised whatever the Count desired. Cagliostro agreed that Beausire, whenever he brought important news, should first receive his payment, gold in hand, and then seek the prize of love in the arms of Mademoiselle Olivia.

All was going on as Cagliostro desired, and very much as Beausire wished also, when, towards the end of December, at an hour very unseasonable for that time of the year, — namely, at six in the morning, — Doctor Gilbert, who had already been at work an hour and a half, heard three raps at his door, which he recognized, by their peculiar intervals, as made by a brother in Free Masonry.

He opened the door therefore, and found Cagliostro, with a smile on his lips, standing the other side of it. Gilbert never met this mysterious man, face to face, without a certain shiver. "Ah Count, is it you?" he said; and then, with an effort, extended his hand, saying: "Welcome, at whatever hour you come, and whatsoever cause brings you hither."

"The cause which brings me, my dear Gilbert, is the wish to have you assist in a philanthropic experiment, of which I have already had the honor of speaking to you."

Gilbert in vain tried to remember to what experiment the Count alluded, and finally said: "I do not recollect it."

"Come with me, all the same, my dear Gilbert; for I have not disturbed you for nothing, I assure you. Besides, you will meet noteworthy people in the place to which we are going."

"Dear Count, wherever you wish me to go, I will go, — first, for your sake. The place whither I go, and the people whom I may meet there, are of secondary importance."

"Come then, for we have no time to lose."

Being already dressed, Gilbert needed only to lay down his pen and don his hat. These two operations accomplished, he said: "Count, I am at your service."

"Let us go!" replied the Count, simply; and he walked ahead while Gilbert followed.

A carriage was in waiting, and the two men entered it. As they started rapidly, without any new orders from the Count, it was evident that the coachman already knew where he was to drive. At the expiration of fifteen minutes, during which Gilbert noticed that they crossed the city, and passed through one of the

barriers, the carriage brought up in a large square courtyard, upon which opened two tiers of small, grated windows.

The gate, which had opened to give the vehicle access, closed behind it. As he stepped out, Gilbert perceived that he was in the courtyard of a prison, which presently he recognized as the one named Bicêtre.

The place, already gloomy enough in its natural aspect, was rendered more so by the dubious daylight, which seemed to descend regretfully into that courtyard. It was about quarter past six in the morning, — the worst hour of the winter, because it is the hour when the cold makes itself felt, even by the most vigorous organizations. A foggy rain, fine as crape, was falling diagonally, and made the walls look gray.

Under the lead of their boss, — but under the special direction of a little man clad in black, who gave the signal for every movement, — five or six carpenters were at work, setting up some machine, of a form unknown and queer.

At sight of the new arrivals the little man in black raised his head. Gilbert shuddered, as he recognized Doctor Guillotin, whom he had met in Marat's cellar. This machine was, in fact, a large copy of the one whereof Gilbert had seen a small model in the home of the editor of "The Friend of the People."

On his side, the little man recognized Cagliostro and Gilbert; and the arrival of these two personages seemed sufficiently important for him to leave the work for an instant, and come to greet them; but he did not do this without bidding the master carpenter give his best attention to the work in hand.

"There, there, Master Guidon, that's very well. Arrange the platform first. The platform's the base of

the structure. When the platform's done, then set up the two posts, and be sure and follow the building-marks on the timber, so that the posts shall be neither too far apart nor too near. For the rest, — well, I shall be close by, and sha' n't lose sight of you."

Then approaching Gilbert and Cagliostro, who met him half-way, he said: "Good-day, Baron. It is very kind of you to come first, and bring the Doctor. Doctor, you will remember that when we met at Marat's, I invited you to share this experiment; only I afterwards forgot your address. You will see something very curious, — the most philanthropic machine ever invented."

Suddenly turning towards the machine, the object of his dearest hopes, he exclaimed: "Here, here, Guidon, what are you about? You're putting it wrong end foremost."

Rushing up the ladder, which two of his assistants had placed against one side of the scaffolding, he was on the platform in an instant, and there his presence served to correct, in a few seconds, the errors committed by the mechanics, — not yet well posted as to the working of this new-fangled machine.

"There, there!" said the Doctor, seeing with satisfaction that everything was now going according to his directions, "there, there! Now the cutter must be placed between the grooves. — Guidon, Guidon," he exclaimed suddenly, as if struck with fear, "why are n't the grooves faced with copper?"

"It was this way, Doctor. I thought that good oak, thoroughly dry, would do as well as copper," replied the master carpenter.

"Oh yes, there it is!" replied the Doctor, disdainfully. "Economy, always economy! — when it is a question of the progress of science and the good of humanity. Guidon,

if our experiment fails to-day, I shall hold you responsible. — Gentlemen, I call you to witness," continued the Doctor, addressing Cagliostro and Gilbert, — "I call you to witness that I ordered copper-lined grooves, and that I protest against the omission of the copper; so if the cutter catches on its way down, or slides badly, it is not my fault, and I wash my hands of it." As he spoke, the Doctor, standing there on the platform of his machine, made the same gesture which was made by Pontius Pilate, on the terrace of his palace, 1700 years before.

At last, despite these little annoyances, the machine was set up, and took on a certain homicidal air, which delighted its inventor, but which chilled Doctor Gilbert.

As to Cagliostro, he remained unmoved; for ever since the death of Lorenza, this man had become marble.

This is the form which the machine now assumed.

First there was a staging, reached by a short step-ladder. This staging, like a scaffold, furnished a platform, measuring some fifteen feet on each side. On this platform, about two-thirds back, and facing the stairs, rose two parallel posts, ten or twelve feet high.

These two posts were ornamented with the famous grooves, from which Master Guidon had economically withheld the copper, — a saving which, as we know, roused the regrets of the philanthropist, Doctor Guillotin.

When released by means of a spring, a crescent-shaped cutter, or knife, was allowed to fall precipitously, its own natural force being augmented a hundred-fold by additional weights placed upon it.

Between the two posts was a small opening. There were two leaves in this opening, and when a man's head was thrust between them, they closed together about the neck, like a collar. A movable board, composed of a

plank as long as the height of an ordinary man, was so hinged as to move up and down at the proper time. When turned down, this plank came upon a level with this opening before described.

This was all very ingenious, as one could readily see.

While the carpenters, Master Guidon, and the Doctor were putting the last touches to the erection of their machine, Cagliostro and Gilbert were discussing the problematical novelty of this instrument, — the Count disputing the originality of the invention, whereto he found something analogous in the Italian *mannaya*, and especially in the *doloire* of Toulouse, used in the execution of Marshal Montmorency, whereof Puységur says: "In this country they make use of a *doloire*, or knife placed between two pieces of wood. When a head is placed on the block, some one loosens the cord, and the knife descends, and separates the head from the body."

Meanwhile new spectators entered the yard, undoubtedly summoned to assist in the experiment.

There was first an old man of our acquaintance, who has played an active part in this long narrative. Touched with a malady wherewith he must soon die, he yet left his chamber, — at the urgency of his confrère Guillotin, and in spite of the bad weather, — in order to see this machine work. Gilbert recognized him, and advanced respectfully to meet him. He was accompanied by Giraud, city architect of Paris, who, by reason of his public position, had been favored with a particular invitation.

The second group — saluting nobody, and by nobody saluted — was composed of four men, very plainly dressed. As soon as they entered, these four men took their places in the corner of the yard farthest removed from Gilbert

and Cagliostro, and humbly remained there, talking in low tones, and standing hat in hand, notwithstanding the rain.

He who appeared to be chief among the four, and to whom the others listened with deference, as he spoke some words in a bass voice, was a man fifty or fifty-two years old. He was tall in stature, and had a benevolent smile and an open countenance. This man was Charles Louis Sanson. He was born on February 15, 1738. He saw his father cut Damiens in quarters; and he also aided him, when he had the honor of cutting off the head of Lally Tollendal. Sanson was commonly called *Monsieur de Paris*. The three other men were his son—who was subsequently to have the honor of aiding in the decapitation of Louis Sixteenth—and his two assistants.

The presence of Monsieur de Paris, his son, and two assistants, lent a terrible eloquence to Guillotin's machine, showing that the experiment was to be made, if not with the guaranty of the government, at least with its approbation.

For the moment Monsieur de Paris appeared somewhat sad. If the machine should be adopted, which he came to see, the picturesque side of his profession would be curtailed. The executioner would no longer appear to the crowd as the Destroying Angel, armed with a flaming sword,—like him who stood at the gate of Eden, to guard it from those who had rebelled against Jehovah. On the contrary, the headsman would appear like a sort of house-porter, pulling the latchstring for the dead, instead of the living. Therein lay Sanson's real objection to the invention.

As the misty rain continued to fall, not so penetratingly, but more steadily, Doctor Guillotin—who doubt-

less feared lest the bad weather should keep away some of his spectators — addressed the most important group, comprising Cagliostro, Gilbert, Doctor Louis, and Architect Giraud, and said to them, like a manager who scents the public impatience: "Gentlemen, we only wait for one person, Doctor Cabanis. When he comes, we will begin."

Hardly were these words out of his mouth than a third vehicle entered the yard, from which emerged a man thirty-eight or forty years old, with a high forehead, intelligent face, and a vivid, inquisitive eye. This was the last visitor expected, Doctor Cabanis. He saluted everybody, with an affable air, such as becomes a medical philosopher, and hastened to offer his hand to Guillotin, who cried, from his place on the platform, "Come then, Doctor, come on. We only waited for you." Then Cabanis mingled in the group with Cagliostro and Gilbert, while the carriage ranged itself with the other two carriages. As to the cab of Monsieur de Paris, that remained modestly outside the gate.

"Gentlemen," said Guillotin, "as nobody else is expected, we will begin at once."

At a sign from his hand a door opened, through which came two men, clad in a sort of gray uniform, carrying on their shoulders a sack, beneath whose folds one could see the outline of the human form.

Behind the panes of the small windows could be seen the pale faces of certain prisoners, whom nobody had dreamed of inviting, but who nevertheless watched the unexpected and terrible spectacle, though understanding neither the apparatus nor its object.

CHAPTER XLI.

A SOIRÉE IN THE FLORAL PAVILION.

ON the evening of the same day, — that is, on Christmas Eve, — there was a reception in the Floral Pavilion.

The Queen, not wishing to hold receptions in her own apartments, the Princess Lamballe received for her, and did the honors of the circle until the Queen arrived. After her Majesty came, everything went on as if they were in the Marsan Pavilion, instead of the Floral.

In the course of the morning the young Baron Isidore de Charny had returned from Turin. As soon as his arrival was known, he was admitted first to the King's presence, and then to the Queen's.

Both received him with extreme friendliness, but especially the Queen, whose noticeable good-will arose from two causes. In the first place, Isidore was Charny's brother; and Charny being absent, it was a great pleasure for the Queen to see his brother. In the next place, Isidore came from the royal relatives, the Comte d'Artois and the Prince de Condé, and brought with him their messages, which were only too much in harmony with ideas cherished in the Queen's own heart.

The Princes commended to the Queen the projects of Favras. They invited her to profit by the devotion of this courageous gentleman, and come at once to Turin. Isidore was also commissioned to express to Favras, in the name of the Princes, their full sympathy with his plans, their approval thereof, and their best wishes for his success.

The Queen kept Isidore with her for an hour, and invited him to come in the evening to Madame Lamballe's circle ; and she only permitted him to retire, when he asked leave to go and discharge his all-important errand to Favras.

The Queen said nothing positive in regard to the project of flight ; only she charged Isidore to repeat to Monsieur and Madame de Favras, what she had already said when she received Madame at their first meeting, and had repeated when she so abruptly entered the King's rooms, and found Monsieur de Favras there.

After leaving the Queen, Isidore betook himself at once to the abiding-place of Favras, who lived at Number Twenty-one in Royal Square.

He was received by Madame, who at first told him that her husband was out ; but when she noted the name of her visitor, and learned what august personages he had just interviewed, and what others he had left five or six days before, she acknowledged that her husband was in the house, and sent for him.

The Marquis came in with a frank look and a smiling eye, for he knew in whose behalf Isidore had come.

The message from the Queen filled the heart of the young conspirator with joy. Everything encouraged his hopes. The plot was going on marvellously well. Twelve hundred horsemen were already assembled at Versailles. Each of them could carry a foot-soldier on his crupper, and this would make twenty-four hundred instead of twelve hundred.

As to the triple assassination of Necker, Bailly, and Lafayette, to be undertaken simultaneously by the three columns, — entering Paris, one by the Roule Barrier, another by the Grenelle Barrier, and the third by the Chaillot Gate, — this had been relinquished, as it was

thought sufficient for their purpose if they should dispose of Lafayette alone.

For this expedition, four men would be enough, provided they were well mounted and well armed. These four were to await Lafayette's carriage at eleven o'clock in the evening, the time when he usually left the Tuileries. Two of them would take positions on the right and left of the street, while the other two would place themselves in front of the carriage.

One of these, holding a letter in his hand, would make a sign for the driver to stop, declaring that he had an important communication for the General. When the carriage stopped, the General would naturally put his head out of one of the windows, and immediately the conspirator would blow his brains out with a pistol.

This was the only special change made in the scheme. The other arrangements were unaltered. As money had been disbursed and the men notified, the King had only to say *yes*; and at a sign from Favras he would be carried off.

Only one thing disquieted the Marquis, — the silence of the King and Queen in regard to this affair. The Queen's silence was now broken by the intervention of Isidore; and vague as were the words transmitted through him to Monsieur and Madame de Favras, these words, coming from a royal mouth, became vastly important.

Isidore promised to report to the King and Queen, that evening, an assurance of the devotion of Favras.

The young Baron, as we know, had left for Turin on the very day of his arrival in Paris, early in October; and he consequently had no lodging, except the chamber belonging to his brother, in the Tuileries; and that brother being absent, Isidore had the chamber opened by the Count's lackey.

At nine in the evening he entered Madame de Lamballe's apartments. He had never been introduced to the Princess, and she did not know him by sight ; but having been forewarned of his visit during the day, by a word from the Queen, the Princess arose when his name was announced. With that charming grace which, in her, took the place of wit, she drew him at once into the circle of her intimate friends.

The King and Queen had not yet arrived. *Monsieur* de Provence, who appeared very uneasy, was talking in the corner with two gentlemen of his inner circle of friends, De la Châtre and D'Avaray. Louis de Narbonne went from one group to another, with the ease of a man who feels himself in his own family.

This circle of intimates was made up of young gentlemen who had resisted the mania for emigration. There was Lameth, who was so much to the Queen, and had never taken part against her. There was D'Ambly, one of the best or worst men of that epoch, according to one's point of view. There were De Castries and De Fersen ; and there was Suleau, chief editor of that witty journal, "The Acts of the Apostles." All these had loyal hearts, but hot heads, and some of them were feather-brained.

Isidore was acquainted with none of these gentlemen ; but when his name was announced, and the Princess honored him with so much affability, all hands were outstretched to him.

Besides, he brought news from that other France, which had established itself in a foreign city. Each of these young men had a relative or friend with the exiled Princes in Turin. Isidore had seen everybody there, and was consequently a sort of second Gazette.

We have indicated Suleau as chief among these men. He was leading the conversation, which roused great

laughter. Suleau had been present that day, at the session of the Assembly. Guillotin had mounted the tribune, vaunted the advantages of the machine he had devised, described the triumphant trial of it made that very morning, and demanded the privilege of substituting it for all the other instruments of death, which had successively stained the Place de Grève, — the wheel, the gallows, the stake, the rack. Seduced by the smoothness of his machine, the Assembly was quite ready to adopt it.

Apropos to this theme, Suleau had written some verses, to the air of the *Exaudet Minuet*, which were to appear next day in his journal.

This song, which he sang in a low voice to the jovial circle about him, provoked such free laughter, that the King, who was coming in with the Queen, heard it in the antechamber; and as he, poor King! could laugh no longer, he promised himself to inquire what possible subject had been found provocative of so much gayety in such a sorry time.

Needless to say, as soon as one usher announced the King, and another the Queen, that all whispering, all conversation, and all bursts of laughter ceased, giving place to respectful silence.

The two royal personages entered. At that time, when the genius of Revolution despoiled royalty of many privileges, one by one, these outward tokens of respect were augmented in private, especially by all true Royalists, to whose courtesy the royal misfortunes lent new force. The year 1789 witnessed great ingratitude; but 1793 witnessed supreme devotion.

Madame de Lamballe and Madame Elizabeth joined the Queen.

Monsieur walked up to the King to present his re-

spects, and, as he bowed, said to him: "My brother, can we not make up a special party, yourself, the Queen, myself, and one of your friends, to the end that we may converse confidentially, under cover of a game of whist?"

"Willingly, my brother," replied the King. "Arrange it with the Queen."

Monsieur approached Marie Antoinette, to whom Charny was offering his respects, and saying, in a low voice: "Madame, I have seen Favras, and have communications of the highest importance for your Majesty."

"My dear sister," interrupted *Monsieur*, "the King desires us to make a card-party of four. We two will unite against yourself, and leave you to choose your own partner."

"Very well," replied the Queen, who suspected that whist was only a pretext, "my choice is made. *Monsieur* Baron de Charny, you will join our game; and while we play, you can give us the news from Turin."

"Ah, you come from Turin, Baron?" said *Monsieur*.

"Yes, Monseigneur; and in returning from Turin, I came by way of Royal Square, where I saw a man most devoted to the King, the Queen, and your Royal Highness."

Monsieur blushed, coughed, and went farther away. He was a man so full of circumspection, that a straightforward mind disconcerted him. He glanced at De la Châtre, who drew near. After receiving some orders in a low voice, De la Châtre left the room.

Meanwhile the King saluted the gentlemen, and the few ladies, who frequented these receptions at the Tuileries, and in return received their homage. Then the Queen took his arm, and drew him towards the card-table.

He approached the table, looked for the fourth player, and perceived Isidore.

"Ah, Monsieur de Charny," he said, "in the absence of your brother, is it you who make up our table? He could not be better replaced, and you are welcome."

By a sign he bade the Queen be seated, sat down himself, and *Monsieur* after him. Then the Queen, in her turn, made a sign of invitation to Isidore, who took the last place.

Madame Elizabeth ensconced herself on a small sofa behind the King, and leaned both arms on the back of his armchair.

They played two or three hands of whist, speaking only the words sacred to the game. At last, though still playing, the Queen — having remarked that respect was keeping everybody conveniently aloof from the royal table — ventured to say to *Monsieur*: "My brother, has the Baron told you that he is just from Turin?"

"Yes," replied *Monsieur*, "he mentioned it."

"He told you that Artois and Condé strongly urge us to join them?"

The King let an impatient movement escape him.

"Brother, I beg you to listen!" whispered Madame Elizabeth, with the sweetness of an angel.

"And you also, my sister?" said the King.

"I, more than anybody else, dear Louis; for, more than anybody else, I love you, and am uneasy about you."

"I also added," Isidore ventured to say, "that I had returned by way of Royal Square, and remained an hour at number twenty-one."

"At number twenty-one?" asked the King. "What is going on there?"

"At number twenty-one dwells a gentleman devoted

to your Majesty, as we all are, — ready to die for your Majesty, as are all of us, — but who, more active than all others, has arranged a plan —”

“What plan, Monsieur?” demanded the King, raising his head.

“If I should have the misfortune to displease the King, by repeating to his Majesty what I know of this project, I will hold my peace.”

“No, no, Monsieur,” said the Queen, hastily. “Speak! People enough form projects *against* us. It is at least well for us to know those who conspire on our side, — that in pardoning our enemies, we may also remember our friends. Tell us, Baron, who is this gentleman?”

“The Marquis de Favras.”

“Ah,” said the Queen, “we know him. And you believe in his devotion, Baron?”

“In his devotion? Yes, Madame! Not only do I believe in it, but I am sure of it.”

“Look out, Monsieur,” said the King, “you are going too far!”

“The heart judges with the heart, Sire. I answer for the devotion of Favras. As to the excellence of his project, as to his chances of success, — oh, that is another thing. I am too young and too prudent to put forth any opinion on such a subject, especially when it concerns the welfare of the King and Queen.”

“And this project, let us hear what it is!” said the Queen.

“Madame, it is ready for execution. If it pleases the King this evening to speak a word or make a sign, tomorrow, at the same hour, he may be at Péronne.”

The King kept silence. *Monsieur* twisted the spine of a poor knave of hearts, who could not very well help himself.

"Sire," said the Queen to her husband, "do you hear what the Baron says?"

"Of course I hear," replied the King, scowling.

"And you, my brother?" she asked *Monsieur*.

"I am not more deaf than the King."

"Well, what do you say to it? At least it is a definite proposition!"

"Undoubtedly," said *Monsieur*, "undoubtedly!" Then turning to Isidore, he added: "Repeat that pretty suggestion."

Isidore replied: "I said that if the King would pronounce the word, or make but a sign, he might be at Péronne within twenty-four hours, thanks to the measures taken by Favras."

"Well, my brother," asked *Monsieur*, "is it not tempting, what the Baron proposes?"

The King turned sharply to *Monsieur* and looked at him searchingly. "If I go, will you go with me?"

"I?"

"Yes, you, my brother of Provence," said the King. "You want me to pledge myself to quit Paris. I repeat my question: If I go, will you go with me?"

"I—but," stammered *Monsieur*, "I was not aware.—None of my preparations are made."

"How? You were not *aware*," said the King, "when you furnished Favras with the money! None of your preparations are made, when you have been informed, hour by hour, as to every point in this plot?"

"This plot?" repeated *Monsieur*, growing pale.

"Undoubtedly, this plot; for it is a conspiracy,—a conspiracy so real, that if it is discovered, Monsieur de Favras will be imprisoned, tried at the Châtelet, and condemned to death,—unless, by solicitations and money, you can save him, as we saved Besenval."

"But if the King could save Besenval, he can rescue Favras also."

"No! What I did for the one, I probably cannot do for the other. Besides, Besenval was *my* man, as Favras is *yours*. Let each save his own, my brother, and we shall both have done our duty."

As he spoke, the King rose, but the Queen held him by the flap of his coat.

"Sire," she said, "whether you accept or refuse, you owe Favras some response."

"I?"

"Yes, something which the Baron de Charny may convey to Favras in the King's name."

"He responds," said Louis Sixteenth, disengaging his coat from the Queen's grasp, "the King responds, that he will not allow himself to be abducted!" And with these words his Majesty walked away.

"That is to say," said *Monsieur*, "if Favras abducts the King without permission, he is welcome to do so, — especially if he succeeds; for whoever fails is a fool, and, in politics, fools deserve double punishment."

"Monsieur de Charny," said the Queen, "this evening, without loss of time, run after Favras, and tell him the King's exact words, — *the King will not allow himself to be abducted*. It is for Favras to comprehend these words, or for you to explicate them. — Go!"

The Baron, who, not without reason, regarded the King's response and the Queen's advice as a double consent, took his hat, went out hurriedly, and threw himself into a cab, bidding the driver take him to Royal Square, number twenty-one.

CHAPTER XLII.

WHAT THE QUEEN HAD SEEN IN A DECANter TWENTY YEARS
BEFORE AT THE TAVERNEY CHÂTEAU.

WHEN the King left the card-table, he walked towards the group of young fellows, whose joyous laughter had attracted his attention before he entered the room.

At his approach a noticeable silence prevailed in the group, so that he asked : "Well, gentlemen, is the King so unhappy that he carries sadness wherever he goes ?"

"Sire! —" murmured the young men.

"Your gayety was lively enough, and your mirth buoyant, when we came in a while ago, the Queen and myself." Then, shaking his head, he added : "Woe to kings, in whose presence none dare laugh !"

"Sire, — the respect, —" began Monsieur de Lameth —

"My dear Charles," interrupted the King, "when you used to leave your seminary on Sundays or Thursdays, and I bade you seek recreation at Versailles, did you deprive yourself of laughter, because I was there ? I said a minute ago, Woe to the king, before whom none dare be merry. Now I say, Happy the king, in whose presence men may laugh."

"Sire," said Monsieur de Castries, "the subject, which afforded us so much mirth, might not appear so comical to your Majesty."

"Of what were you talking, gentlemen ?"

"Sire," said Suleau, coming forward, "I deliver the culprit to your Majesty."

"Ah, Monsieur Suleau! I have read the last number of your 'Acts of the Apostles.' Have a care! Have a care!"

"Of what, Sire?" demanded the young journalist.

"You are a little too much of a Royalist. You might easily get yourself into a bad scrape with the lover of Mademoiselle Théroigne."

"With Monsieur Populus," laughingly asked Suleau.

"Precisely. By the way, what has become of the heroine of that poem?"

"Théroigne?"

"Yes. I hear nothing of her nowadays."

"Sire, I believe she thinks our Revolution does not get on fast enough, and has gone to hurry up the Revolution in Brabant. Your Majesty is doubtless aware that this chaste amazon is at Liège?"

"No, I did not know it. Is this what you were laughing at just now?"

"No, Sire, but about the National Assembly."

"Ah ha, gentlemen! Then you did well to become serious when you saw me. I can't allow anybody in *my* house to laugh at the National Assembly. To be sure," added the King, by way of compromise, "I am not now at home, but in the apartments of the Princess Lamballe; so if you laugh at that no longer, or even laugh at it very softly, you can still tell me what made you laugh so loud awhile ago."

"Does the King know what question was agitated to-day at the session of the National Assembly?"

"Yes, and that makes me even more interested. Was there not under consideration a new machine for the execution of criminals?"

"Offered by Doctor Guillotin to the nation! Yes, Sire," said Suleau.

"Oh Monsieur! and you were ridiculing Guillotin, a philanthropist? You forget that I am a philanthropist myself."

"Oh Sire, I do not forget! There are philanthropists *and* philanthropists. For instance, there is, at the head of the French nation, a philanthropist who has abolished the preparatory suffering, the examination of prisoners under torture. Such a philanthropist we respect, we venerate; nay, we do more, we love him, Sire."

All the young fellows bowed low, as by common consent.

"But," continued Suleau, "there are other philanthropists who, being already physicians, and having in their hands the means, more or less skilful, for disposing of sick folks, are still seeking some means of getting rid of the well ones. Faith, Sire, I beg you to leave such philanthropists to my tender mercies."

"And what would you do with them, — behead them *without suffering?*" asked the King, alluding to the claim set forth by Doctor Guillotin. "Would they quit this world with only *a slight coolness* about their necks?"

"Sire, that is precisely what I wish for them, but that is not what I have promised them."

"How? What you wish for them?" said the King.

"Yes, Sire! I wish that all fellows who invent such machines might be the first to try them. I do not pity Master Aubriot very much, because he had a chance to test the walls of the Bastille; nor Messire Enguerrand de Marigny, who was the first to enjoy the gibbet at Mont-faucon. Fortunately I have not the honor of being a magistrate. It is therefore probable that I shall be obliged, in the presence of the respectable Guillotin, to confine myself to what I have promised him, and have already begun to accomplish."

"And what have you promised, — or rather, what have you done?"

"Well, the notion struck me that this great benefactor of humanity ought to derive some recompense from the benefaction itself; so to-morrow morning — in the copy of my 'Acts of the Apostles,' which is being printed to-night — a christening will take place. It is but just that the child of Monsieur Guillotin — recognized to-day as such publicly, by its father, in the presence of the National Assembly — should be named *Mademoiselle Guillotine*."

Even the King could not help smiling.

"And as there is never a marriage or baptism without its song," said Lameth, "Suleau has made a couple of songs for his godchild."

"Two?" said the King.

"Sire," said Suleau, "the poet must suit all tastes."

"And to what melody have you set these songs? I can think of nothing so suitable as the funereal chant, *De Profundis*, — 'Out of the Depths.'"

"Oh, your Majesty! You forget the pleasure it will be to have one's throat cut by the daughter of Monsieur Guillotin, — that is, if he thrusts his head into her doorway. No, Sire! One of my songs is set to an air which is just now all the rage, the *Exaudet Minuet*. The other takes in several melodies, — a sort of mixture."

"And may one have a foretaste of your poesy?" asked the King.

Suleau bowed and said: "I do not belong to the National Assembly, and therefore do not presume to limit the authority of my King. No, I am an obedient subject of your Majesty; and my opinion is, that the King should have whatever he wishes."

"Very well, I am listening."

"Sire, I obey," said Suleau ; and he sang, in a low voice, the following ditty, to the melody called the *Exaudet Minuet*, as we have said :¹

Guillotin,
Deep-learned man, —
Politician
And physician, —
Took a shine, one morning fine,
Hanging not to deem divine,
Nor his country's mission.

In a trice,
His device, —
Such a beauty ! —
Having neither rope nor stress,
Must the hangman's art suppress,
And his duty.

All in vain a few may teach,
This the craft of envious leech, —
To uphold
The school of old
Hippocrates, —
The trade to swift monopolize,
Of dealing death to convict flies,
For frequent fees,
All at their ease.

¹ This somewhat rough version of these Revolutionary songs is furnished by the Translator, with the hope of reproducing, in some degree, not merely the ideas of Suleau's stanzas, but their satire, spirit, metrical rhythm, and recurrent rhymes ; and to this end all attempts at poetic sentiment have been subordinated. It may be helpful, for those unacquainted with French, to know that the final syllable *in*, in such words as *Guillotin*, is always so pronounced as nearly to rhyme with our word *man*. Except where two or three lines have been added, so as to convey the whole meaning, this translation follows the French verses pretty carefully, though the Translator is fully aware of its many deficiencies.

Our doctor bold —
 As we are told,
 This work to do —
 Consulted with his colleagues suave,
 Chapelier, and eke Barnave, —
 The headsman too.

Straightway stands,
 From his hands,
 This machine, —
 Which with ease may slay us all,
 And which, after him, we call,
Guillotine !

The laughter of the young fellows redoubled. Although these verses did not appear so very amusing to the King ; yet, as Suleau was one of his most steadfast adherents, he did not wish that journalist to note the peculiar feeling which agitated the royal heart, and which the King himself could not account for ; so he said, "But, my dear Suleau, you spoke of *two* songs. You have given us the *godfather*. Now for the *godmother* at the baptism."

"Sire," responded Suleau, "the godmother awaits the honor of an introduction. She marches to the tune, *Paris, the King's*."

Monsieur Guillotin,
 The medicine-man,
 Whom the good of his race
 Must ever engage, —
 Advances apace,
 With demeanor so sage,
 And the word for the age, —
 Prompt suggesting
 A small blessing, —
 Interesting, —

In words not prolix ;
 But his phrases
 Win him praises,
 From fools five or six, —
 Grandiloquent tricks !

“ Dear gents, who safely lead us ! —
 For every human flaw,
 Your wisdom hath decreed us
 Equality in law.
 Awhile if you deign to listen,
 Persuaded you soon must be,
 That if it is cruel to hang men,
 Far worse to be hanged it must be.

“ What shall be done ?
 When a worthy citizen,
 In choler or in fun,
 Assassinate his neighbor,
 What shall be done ?

“ To benefit is my intention,
 And drag you through these straits,
 And so I have made an invention,
 Which quick decapitates.

“ ’T is a blow which is received,
 Ere one hears it popping ;
 Scarcely is the cut perceived, —
 One sees next to nothing.

“ A hidden spring, with a boost,
 All of a sudden unloosed,
 Sets gliding,
 Ding — ding !
 Sets shying,
 Ying — ying !
 Sends gliding,
 Sends shying,
 Sends flying
 The head.
 Very little to dread ! ”

"Well, gentlemen, you laugh," said the King; "nevertheless, this machine is intended to spare condemned criminals much suffering. What does society ask, when it demands the death of the guilty? Solely and simply this, — the suppression of the individual. If that suppression is accompanied by suffering, as with the wheel or the rack, then punishment is no longer justice; it is vengeance."

"But, Sire," observed Suleau, "who can assure your Majesty that suffering is diminished by the severance of the head thus from the body? Who can say whether life does not survive in both sections, the trunk and the head, and that the dying person may not suffer doubly, having a horrible consciousness of his duality?"

"That is a fair question for discussion among the members of the faculty. — By the way, an experiment was made at the Bicêtre Prison, this very morning, I believe. Was no one of you gentlemen present at that experiment?"

"No, Sire! No, no, no!" exclaimed a dozen or fifteen merry voices, almost simultaneously.

"I was there, Sire," said a graver voice.

The King turned and saw Gilbert, who had entered during the conversation, had respectfully drawn near, but had stood silent till now, when he suddenly answered the King's interrogation.

"Ah Doctor," said the King, with a shudder, "so you were there."

"Yes, Sire."

"And how did the experiment succeed?"

"Perfectly well, with the first two subjects, Sire; but with the third, though the vertebral column was cut, it was still necessary to use a knife in severing the head entirely from the body."

The young men listened with open mouths and horrified eyes.

"How, Sire," said Charles Lameth, evidently speaking for the others, as well as for himself, "three men were executed this morning?"

"Yes, gentlemen," said the King; "only these three men were three corpses, sent from the hospital, Hôtel Dieu. — And your opinion, Gilbert?"

"As to what, Sire?"

"As to the instrument."

"Sire, it is evidently a great improvement on any machine for this purpose hitherto invented; but the accident, which happened to the third victim, proves that the machine needs perfecting."

"And how is it constructed," asked the King, whose instinct for mechanism was at once aroused.

Thereupon Gilbert endeavored to give some description; but as the King could not understand the exact shape of the instrument, even from the Doctor's explanation, he said: "Come, come, Doctor. Here, on this table, are quills, ink, and paper. You draw, I believe?"

"Yes, Sire!"

"Make me an outline, and I shall understand better."

As the young gentlemen, restrained by their respect for the King, did not venture to follow without an invitation, he added: "Come, gentlemen, come. This subject is one which should interest all mankind."

"And then who knows," said Suleau, in a low voice, "if one of us is not destined for the honor of espousing Mademoiselle Guillotine? Come, gentlemen, let us make the acquaintance of our future bride."

Following Gilbert and the King they clustered about the table, where (by the King's bidding) Gilbert seated himself, the better to draw his design.

He began the sketch of the machine, and Louis followed every line with the closest attention. Nothing was wanting, — neither the platform, the stairway which led to it, the two upright beams, the movable plank, the little aperture, nor the crescent-shaped blade.

Gilbert was finishing this last detail, when the King stopped him. "Parbleu ! It is not surprising the experiment failed, especially with the third trial."

"Why so ?" asked Gilbert.

"On account of the shape of the cutter," replied the King. "It was certainly no mechanic's idea, to give the crescent shape to a blade intended for cutting any material likely to offer much resistance."

"But what form would your Majesty have given to it ?"

"It is very simple, — a triangle."

Gilbert undertook to correct his sketch.

"Not so, not that way," said the King. "Give me your quill."

"Sire, here is the quill and the chair," said Gilbert, rising.

"See here, see here !" said King Louis, carried away by his fondness for mechanism. "Bring the steel to a point, so, — like a wedge. Bevel it, thus, — so — and so ! Then, I warrant you it will cut off twenty-five heads, one after the other, without a rebuff from one of them."

He had hardly uttered these words when a piercing cry — a cry of fright, almost of despair — sounded just above his head. He turned quickly and saw the Queen, pale, distracted, reeling, as she fell fainting into Gilbert's arms.

Urged by curiosity, like the others, she had approached the table, and was leaning on the King's chair, looking over his shoulder, at the very instant when he added his correction to the sketch. She instantly recognized the

hideous machine, of which Cagliostro had made her see the image, twenty years before, at the Château de Taverney.

At this sight she had only strength enough to scream ; and then, as if life had already abandoned her, — by the fatal operation of the machine itself, — she fell, as already related, into the arms of Gilbert.

NOTE. — The original of the two Guillotine songs is here appended.

SONG FIRST.

Guillotin,
Médecin
Politique,
Imagine, un beau matin,
Que pendre est inhumain,
Et peu patriotique.

Aussitôt
Il lui faut
Un supplice,
Qui, sans corde ni poteau,
Supprime du bourreau
L'office.

C'est en vain que l'on publie
Que c'est pure jalousie
D'un suppôt
u tripot
D'Hippocrate,
Qui du tuer impunément,
Même exclusivement,
Se flatte.

Le Romain
Guillotin,
Qui s'apprête,
Consulte gens du métier,
Barnave et Chapelier,
Même le coupe-tête ;

Et sa main
Fait soudain
La machine,
Que simplement nous tûra,
Et que l'on nommera :
Guillotine.

SONG SECOND.

Monsieur Guillotin,
Ce grand médecin,
Que l'amour du prochain
Occupe sans fin,
S'avance soudain,
Prend la parole enfin,
Et, d'un air bénin,
Il propose
Peu de chose,
Qu'il expose
En peu de mots ;
Mais l'emphase
De sa phrase
Obtient les bravos
De cinq ou six sots.

“ Messieurs, dans votre sagesse,
Si vous avez décrété,
Pour toute humaine faiblesse,
La loi de l'égalité,
Pour peu qu'on daigne m'entendre,
On sera bien convaincu,
Que, s'il est cruel de pendre,
Il est dur d'être pendu.

“ Comment donc faire,
Quand un honnête citoyen,
Dans un mouvement de colère,
Assassinera son prochain ?
Comment donc faire ?
En rêvant à la sourdine,
Pour vous tirer d'embarras,
J'ai fait une machine,
Qui met les têtes à bas !

“ C'est un coup que l'on reçoit,
Avant qu'on s'en doute ;
À peine on s'en aperçoit,
Car on n'y voit goutte ;
Un certain ressort caché,
Tout à coup étant lâché,
Fait tomber !
Ber ! ber !
Fait sauter !
Ter ! ter !
Fait tomber ;
Fait sauter ;
Fait voler
La tête !
C'est bien plus honnête ! ”

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE PHYSICIAN FOR THE BODY AND THE PHYSICIAN FOR
THE SOUL.

ONE can readily understand that such an occurrence inevitably interrupted the soirée.

Although nobody could assign any cause for the Queen's swoon, the fact remained, that as soon as she had looked at the design drawn by Gilbert, and retouched by the King, the Queen fainted.

When this was known throughout the room, all retired, except those who belonged to the household, or were among the special friends of the royal family.

Gilbert gave his first attention to the Queen. Madame Lamballe would not consent to have her removed to the royal apartments. Indeed this would have been difficult, as Madame Lamballe lived in the Floral Pavilion, while the Queen occupied the Marsan Pavilion, and it would have been necessary to carry the lifeless body the whole length of the palace.

The royal invalid was consequently placed on a lounge in the bedroom of the Princess, who — having divined, with the intuition peculiar to women, that there was something mysterious and dark concealed beneath this unexpected event — sent everybody away, even the King, and stood at the foot of the couch, with a tender but anxious mien, awaiting the moment when, thanks to Gilbert's remedies, the Queen should recover her senses.

Now and then the Princess asked the Doctor a question ; but he was powerless to hasten the Queen's recovery, and could only tranquillize her friend with commonplace assurances.

For some time the shock to the poor Queen's nervous system was so intense that the application of smelling-salts to her nose and of vinegar to her temples was insufficient to restore her to life ; but at last a slight cramp in the extremities indicated a return to sensibility. She moved her head slowly from right to left, as if waking from a painful dream. Then she heaved a sigh, and reopened her eyes.

It was evident that life had returned before reason. For some seconds she looked about the room, with that vague expression belonging to one who neither knows where she is nor what has happened ; but presently a light tremor ran through her body. Then she uttered a faint cry, and placed her hand over her eyes, as if to dispel some horrible illusion.

Memory had reawakened. The crisis was past.

Gilbert could not conceal from himself that the accident had some moral cause. He knew how little effect medicine has in such phenomenal cases, and he prepared to withdraw ; but at his first backward step, as if by some interior sense she had guessed his intention, the Queen put out her hand and grasped his arm, and said, with a voice as nervous as the gesture which accompanied it, "Remain !"

Gilbert paused, much astonished. He was not ignorant of the Queen's want of sympathy with himself ; albeit, on the other side, he had before remarked the strange and almost magnetic influence which he exercised over her.

"I am at the Queen's orders," he said ; "but I think

it would be well to calm the anxiety of the King, and of the other friends who remain in the drawing-room, and if your Majesty will permit — ”

“Thérèse,” said the Queen, addressing Madame Lamballe, “go and tell the King that I am myself again ; and then see that I am not interrupted, for I must talk with Doctor Gilbert.”

The Princess obeyed, with that passive amiability which was the dominant trait in her character, and even in her physiognomy.

Leaning on her elbow the Queen followed the Princess with her eyes, and waited till there was time to fulfil her errand. Then, seeing how effectually that mission was accomplished, — thanks to the vigilance of the Princess, — the Queen felt at liberty to converse at her leisure with the Doctor ; so she turned toward him, fixing her glance upon his face.

“Doctor,” she demanded, “are you not astonished that accident constantly brings you face to face with me, in the physical and moral crises of my life ? ”

“Alas, Madame ! I do not know whether I ought to be thankful or regretful over such accidents.”

“Why so, Monsieur ? ”

“Because I read in the depths of your heart that it is neither to your desire nor your will that I owe this honorable contact.”

“I said *accident* ! You know that I am frank. Under the trying circumstances which have recently brought us together, you have shown genuine devotion. I do not forget it, and I thank you for it.”

Gilbert bowed. The Queen noted the movement of his face, as well as of his body. “I also am a physiognomist,” she said. “Do you know that you have answered me without speaking a word ? ”

"Madame, I should be in despair if my silence were less respectful than my speech."

"You were saying to yourself, that I had thanked you, because that was the regular thing for me to do, but that we had better change the subject."

"I at least showed my wish that her Majesty should put my devotion to the proof, and permit me to manifest it in some more efficacious manner than I have been able to do so far; and perhaps this sort of wistful impatience is what the Queen noticed in my countenance."

"Monsieur Gilbert," she said, looking steadfastly at the Doctor, "you are a superior man, and I wish to make the *amende honorable*. I was formerly prejudiced against you, but those prejudices exist no longer."

"Her Majesty will permit me to thank her from the bottom of my heart, not for the compliment wherewith she deigns to honor me, but for the assurance which she gives me."

"Doctor," replied the Queen, as if what she was about to say was the natural outgrowth of what she had said already, "what do you think of the illness which has just come to me?"

"Madame, I am an exact man, a scientific man. Have the goodness to put your question in a more precise form."

"I ask if you believe my swoon was caused by one of those nervous crises to which we poor women are subjected by the weakness of our organization, or do you suspect that the accident had a more serious cause?"

"I answer your Majesty, that the daughter of Maria Theresa, — that the woman whom I saw so calm and courageous on that terrible October night, — is no ordinary woman, and consequently not moved by one of those accidents which take hold of ordinary women."

"You are quite right, Doctor. — Do you believe at all in presentiments?"

"Science rejects all phenomena which tend to reverse the material and natural order of things, and therefore it sets aside all such facts as give the lie to natural law."

"I should have said, Do you believe in predictions?"

"I believe the Supreme Goodness, for our best good, hides the future behind an impenetrable veil. Some minds, endowed by Nature with great scientific accuracy, may sometime be able, through a study of the past, to lift a corner of the veil, and see dimly, as through a mist, events to come; but these exceptions are rare; for since religion would abolish belief in fatality, and philosophy has set limits to faith, the prophets have lost three quarters of their art. Nevertheless —"

"Well, nevertheless —?" rejoined the Queen, seeing him lost in thought.

"Nevertheless, Madame," he continued, as if it required an effort to deal with questions which his reason relegated to the domain of skepticism, — "nevertheless, there is a man —"

"A man —?" repeated the Queen, who followed with interest his halting words.

"There is a man who has confounded, with incontestable facts, all the arguments of my intelligence."

"And that man is —?"

"I dare not name him to your Majesty."

"That man is your master, is he not, Monsieur Gilbert? This man, all-powerful, immortal, is the divine Cagliostro."

"Madame, my only master, my true master, is Nature. Cagliostro is only my benefactor. Pierced by a ball, which passed through my breast, — rapidly losing my blood, through a wound which, since I have become a

physician, and after twenty years of study, I still regard as incurable, — he healed me in a few days, thanks to a balm, of whose composition I am yet ignorant. Thence arises my gratitude, — I might almost say, admiration.”

“And this man has made you predictions which have been accomplished?”

“Strangely and incredibly, Madame! Yes, that man marches forward in the present, with an assurance which compels you to believe in his knowledge of the future.”

“So if that man had predicted something about yourself, you would believe his prophecy?”

“I should certainly act as if it might be fulfilled.”

“So that if he had predicted for you a premature death, terrible and disgraceful, you would prepare yourself for that death?”

“After everything else, Madame, — after having tried to escape, by all accessible means.”

“Escape? No, Doctor, no! I see plainly that I am condemned. This Revolution is a maelstrom which will engulf the throne. The populace is a lion which will devour me.”

“Ah, Madame! The lion, which you dread, you can compel to lie down at your feet, like a lamb.”

“Have you not seen the populace at Versailles?”

“Have *you* not seen the populace at the *Tuileries*? They make an ocean, Madame, which beats incessantly upon, and threatens to extirpate, the rock which opposes its course, yet caresses the ship which is intrusted to its keeping.”

“Doctor, all was long ago at an end between the people and myself. They hate me, and I do not understand them.”

“Because you do not know each other. Cease to be a Queen to the people, and become a mother. Forget that

you are the daughter of Maria Theresa, our old enemy. Forget that you are the sister of Joseph the Second, our false friend. Be a Frenchwoman, and you will hear the voices of the people uplifted to bless you, and you will see the arms of the people extended to caress you."

Marie Antoinette shrugged her shoulders. "Yes, I know them! They blessed yesterday. They caress to-day. To-morrow they will throttle those whom they have blessed and caressed."

"Because they feel that there is in such unfortunates some resistance to the popular will, that hatred is returned for love."

"Do they know what they love and what they hate? The populace becomes an element of destruction, like wind, water, and fire, yet with all the caprices of a woman."

"Because you only see the shore, Madame, as the visitor on the cliffs sees the ocean. Advancing and retreating, without any apparent motive, it breaks in foam at your feet, and enwraps you in moans which you mistake for roars. But this is not the way you ought to consider it. You should regard the ocean as moved by the spirit of the Lord who rules the great waters. You should see the ocean as God sees it, marching on in unity, yet breaking through whatever obstacle stands in its way. You are Queen of the French, not merely of France, Madame; yet you ignore what is taking place in France at this very hour. Raise your veil, Madame, instead of lowering it, and you will admire, instead of fear the people."

"What then shall I see, — so fine, so magnificent, so splendid?"

"You will see a new world born amidst the ruins of the old. You will see the cradle of France, floating like the bulrush ark of Moses, but on a stream much bigger

than the Nile, than the Mediterranean, or even the ocean. God protect thee, oh cradle, God guard thee, oh France ! ”

Though so little of an enthusiast, Gilbert lifted his eyes and arms towards Heaven. The Queen regarded him with surprise. She could not understand him.

“ And whither will this cradle float ? ” she asked. “ To the National Assembly, that convention of disputants, of destroyers, of levellers ? Is old France to guide the new ? Unhappy mother, for so beautiful a child ! ”

“ No, Madame ! but wherever that cradle may find a resting-place, one day or another, — to-day, perhaps to-morrow, — men will call that unknown land their Nation ; and the babe will find a vigorous nurse, a nourisher of strong people, — Liberty ! ”

“ Grand words, which abuse has killed, — Nation and Liberty.”

“ No, Madame, not only grand words, but grand ideas, grand facts. Look at France, at a moment when she is already bruised, when nothing is as yet reconstructed ; when she has no regular municipalities, and hardly departments ; when she has no laws, and everybody is a law unto himself. See her cross, with steadfast eye and assured step, the passage which leads from the old to the new, that narrow bridge across the abyss. See that bridge, — slender as that which Mohammed saw leading into Paradise, — which France traverses without swerving. Whither goeth that ancient France ? Into the unity of a common country. All that was heretofore believed to be difficult, painful, insurmountable, has become not only possible, but easy. Our loosely bound union of provinces was but a sheaf of prejudices, a bundle of opposing interests, of individual notions. Nothing could prevail, it was believed, against the twenty-five or

thirty nationalities, which repelled the one general nationality. Would old Languedoc, old Toulouse, old Brittany, consent to make themselves part of Normandy, Burgundy, or Dauphiny? No, Madame; but all together they are willing to make France. Why were they so obstinate about their rights, their privileges, their independent legislation? Because they had no common country, no Nation. Now, as I have told you, Madame, National Unity has appeared to them. Somewhat far in the future, it may be, but still they have seen it, — the fruitful and immortal mother, calling to her arms her isolated and lost children. She who calls them is their common mother. In their humility they have called themselves Languedocians, Provençals, Bretons, Normans, Burgundians, Dauphinese; but they were mistaken, for they are all French, they are part of France."

"But according to you, Doctor," said the Queen, with a touch of irony, "France, this ancient France, — the eldest daughter of the Church, as the popes have called her since the Ninth Century, — never existed till yesterday."

"That is precisely wherein lies the miracle, Madame. There was a *France*, but now there are *the French*; and not only are they French, but they are brothers, brothers who grasp each other by the hand. My God, Madame, men are not so bad as your world may think. They tend towards sociability. All your unnatural inventions have failed to keep them entirely apart, — your interior custom-houses, your innumerable tollgates, your ferries on the rivers, your turnpikes on the highways, your diverse local laws, your differing regulations, weights, and measures, your provincial rivalries, in towns, cities, and hamlets. Some fine day a trembling of the earth will shake the throne, will overturn ancient walls, will destroy all obstacles. Men will then look at each other in

the face of Heaven, — basking in the peaceful and happy light of that sunshine which not only fertilizes the earth but the heart. Fraternity will hasten a holy harvest. Enemies, astonished at the hatred which has so long agitated them, will advance, not against one another, but towards one another, with open arms, not filled with weapons; and this will be done naturally, not officially, or by command. Under the flood-tide, rivers and mountains will disappear. Geography will be no more. The universal hymn, which thirty millions of French people chant, will be in these words :

Praise God who hath made us a Nation !

and there will be many accents, but one tongue."

"What are you coming to, Doctor? Do you hope to reassure me by a vision of such a general federation, of thirty millions of rebels against their King and Queen?"

"Ah Madame, undeceive yourself!" cried Gilbert. "It is not the people who rebel against King and Queen. It is King and Queen who are in rebellion against the people, — rulers who continue to talk about *privileges* and *royalty*, when all around them the people are talking of fraternity and duty. In your mind's eye glance at some popular feast, and you will almost always see an altar, in the middle of a vast plain, or on some hillock, — an altar pure as Abel's; and on that altar you will see a little child, which all the feasters have adopted. Dowered with the vows, the gifts, the tears of all, it becomes the child of all, — the child of a regiment of hearts. Madame, France — the France of yesterday, of which I speak — is the infant on the altar. Only around that altar are no longer grouped villages and cities, but peoples and nations. France is the Christ born in a manger, amidst the lowly, for the salvation of a world. Peoples shall

rejoice in this birth. Kings shall bend the knee and bring their tributes, like the three from the far East, who came to the stable in Bethlehem. Italy, Poland, Ireland, and Spain look to this infant, born yesterday, who yet prophesies their future. With tear-filled eyes they stretch forth their enchained hands, and exclaim: 'France, France, in thee are we free!' — Madame, Madame," continued Gilbert, appealingly, "it is not yet too late. Take this infant on the altar, and be you its mother!"

"Doctor, you forget that I have other children, the offspring of my life, and that in doing what you suggest, I should be disinheriting them for a stranger."

"If it be so, Madame," replied Gilbert, with deep sorrow, "wrap your children in the war-mantle of Maria Theresa, and take them outside of France; for you say truly, the people will devour you, and your babes with you. Only there is no time to be lost. Hasten, Madame, hasten!"

"And you do not oppose our departure, Monsieur?"

"Far from it! When I learn your real intentions, I will aid you, Madame."

"This falls out marvellously well," said the Queen, "for there is a gentleman already at work for us, devoted until death."

"Ah, Madame!" exclaimed Gilbert, with terror, "it cannot be the Marquis de Favras of whom you speak?"

"Who has told his name? Who has betrayed our project?"

"Oh Madame, be on your guard. A fatal prediction pursues him also."

"And by the same prophet?"

"Even so!"

"And according to that prophet, what fate awaits Favras?"

"A premature death, disgraceful and terrible, — like the one you spoke of just now!"

"You say well, there is no time to lose, if we would disappoint this prophet of evil."

"You mean to notify Favras that you accept his help?"

"At this very instant he is being notified, Monsieur Gilbert, and I await his reply."

Affrighted by the events in which he suddenly found himself embroiled, Gilbert passed his hand over his forehead, as if to gain some light. At that moment Madame Lamballe entered, and whispered two words in the Queen's ear.

"Let him come in! Let him come in!" cried the Queen. "The Doctor knows all. — Doctor, this is Vicomte Isidore de Charny, who brings me a response from the Marquis de Favras. By to-morrow the Queen will have quitted Paris. The day after, we shall be outside of France. Come, Monsieur de Charny, come. — Great God! — What is the matter? — Why are you so pale?"

"The Princess says I may speak before Doctor Gilbert —?" said Isidore.

"And that is true! Yes, yes, — speak! You have seen Favras? He is ready? We accept his offer! We will leave Paris, leave France."

"The Marquis has been arrested within the hour, on the Rue Beaurepaire, and taken to the royal prison of the Châtelet."

The Queen's glance met Gilbert's. Hers was luminous, desperate, wrathful. All the strength of Marie Antoinette seemed concentrated in that look.

Gilbert approached her, and said, with an accent of profound pity: "Madame, if I can be of any service to you,

dispose of me. My intelligence, my devotion, my life, are at your feet."

The Queen raised her eyes slowly towards the Doctor and said calmly, in a resigned tone: "Monsieur Gilbert, you who are so wise, you who witnessed the experiment this morning, is it your opinion that death by this hideous machine will be as easy as its inventor claims?"

Gilbert sighed, and covered his eyes with his hand.

At that moment *Monsieur*, who knew all he wished to know, — for the news of the arrest of Favras had spread over the palace in a few seconds, — *Monsieur* ordered his carriage in all haste, and was going out without bothering himself to inquire about the Queen's health, and almost without taking leave of the King; but Louis Sixteenth barred his passage, saying: "My brother, you are not in such urgent haste to reach the Luxembourg that you have no time to give me a little counsel, I suppose? In your opinion, what ought I to do?"

"You ask what I would do, if I were in your place?"

"Yes!"

"I should abandon Favras, and swear fidelity to the Constitution."

"How could you swear fidelity to a Constitution not yet completed?"

"All the more reason, my brother," replied *Monsieur*, with that false and indirect look, which shared the serpentine ways of his heart, "all the more reason why you would not feel obliged afterwards to keep your oath."

The King remained an instant in thought. Then he said: "This will not interfere with my writing to Bouillé that our plan still holds good, but is postponed. This delay will give Charny time to go carefully over the route we ought to take."

CHAPTER XLIV.

PROVENCE DISAVOWS FAVRAS AND THE KING SWEARS TO
SUPPORT THE CONSTITUTION.

THE day after the arrest of Favras, the following singular circular was scattered throughout Paris :

The Marquis de Favras, living in Royal Square, was arrested, with Madame his wife, during the night of the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth, on account of a plot which had for its purpose the enlistment of thirty thousand men, to assassinate M. de Lafayette and the Mayor of the City, and also to deprive us of the means of subsistence.

Monsieur, the King's brother, was at the head of the affair.

Signed :

BARAUZ.

One can understand the commotion which such a circular would create in the Paris of 1789 and 1790, so easily roused. A lighted train of powder could not have produced a more rapid flame, than that set afoot by this incendiary paper. It was at once in everybody's hands ; and two hours later, everybody knew it by heart.

On the evening of the twenty-sixth, the day after Christmas, the members of the City Government were assembled in council at the Hôtel de Ville, or City Hall, reading the report rendered by the Investigating Committee, when the usher unexpectedly announced that *Monsieur* requested admission.

" *Monsieur !*" repeated the worthy Bailly, who presided at the meeting, " which *Monsieur ?* "

" *Monsieur*, the King's brother," replied the usher.

At these words the members looked at one another, for since yesterday the name of *Monsieur* had been in everybody's mouth ; but they also arose respectfully in their places.

Bailly threw an inquiring glance around the circle, and as the mute responses, which he read in the eyes of his colleagues, seemed to him unanimous, he said : " Go tell *Monsieur* that we are ready to receive him, though very much astonished at the honor he does us."

A few seconds later *Monsieur* was introduced.

He was alone. His face was pale. His step, ordinarily not very steadfast, was to-night more vacillating than usual.

Happily for the Prince, the members of the Common Council sat around a large semicircular table, shaped like a horseshoe, and near each seat were lights, to aid the Councillors in their work ; whereas the Prince stood facing them, from the enclosure of the horseshoe, which was left in comparative obscurity.

This circumstance did not escape *Monsieur's* notice, and tended to give him confidence. He looked timidly at the large assemblage, wherein he at least saw some respect, in default of sympathy, and spoke with a trembling voice, which grew stronger as he went on. This speech is reproduced from the historic records, without the alteration of a syllable.

" Gentlemen, the desire to repel a calumny has brought me into your midst. Monsieur de Favras was arrested night before last, by order of your Investigating Committee ; and to-day the report is abroad that *I* am entangled with him."

Smiles lighted the faces of his auditors, and the first part of his address was received with chuckles.

He continued : " In my character as a citizen of Paris

I think it a duty to myself to inform you of the only relations which I have ever sustained towards Favras."

As one may easily imagine, the attention of the members of the Common Council redoubled. They were glad to hear from *Monsieur's* own mouth, whether they believed him or not, what the relations were between Favras and his Royal Highness.

He continued in these terms : "In 1772 the Marquis de Favras enlisted in my Swiss Guards, which he left in 1775. Since that date I have not spoken with him."

A murmur of incredulity passed through the audience ; but it was checked by a look from Bailly, and *Monsieur* was left in doubt whether it was a murmur of approbation or disapprobation.

He resumed : "Deprived, during several months, of the enjoyment of my revenues, and anxious about some heavy payments which I must make in January, I wished to be able to meet these agreements, without being indebted to the public treasury. I therefore resolved to obtain a loan. Favras had been hereabouts a fortnight or so, and he was pointed out, by Monsieur de la Châtre, as a man able to procure such a loan, from a certain Genoese banker. Consequently I signed an obligation for two millions, the amount necessary for meeting my engagements at the commencement of the year, and for supporting my regular establishment. This affair was purely financial, and I charged my steward to see to it. I have not seen Favras. I have not written him, or held any communication with him. What he has done in other matters is utterly beyond my knowledge."

A contemptuous laugh, which came from some of his audience, proved that everybody was not disposed to credit, even on his own word, the Prince's singular assertion, — that without seeing the agent, especially when

that agent was one of his old officers, Provence had intrusted to him negotiations for two millions of francs.

Monsieur blushed. Anxious to get out of the false position in which he found himself, he hastily continued: "Well, I learned yesterday, gentlemen, that there was being profusely distributed, throughout the capital, a paper which reads thus."

Thereupon he read the bulletin just now cited, — a very useless proceeding, as everybody had the circular, either in his hand or his head.

At the last words, "*Monsieur*, the King's brother, was at the head of the affair," all the members of the Common Council bowed. Did the members mean that they were of the same mind as the circular; or did they simply mean that they were not ignorant of the accusation?

Monsieur persevered: "You would hardly expect me, I suppose, to so far forget my rank as to condescend to justify myself from such a charge; but at a time when the most absurd calumny may easily lead you to confound your best citizens with enemies of the Revolution, I have concluded, gentlemen, that it is due to the King, to you, and to myself, to enter into all the details to which you have listened, in order that public opinion may not remain unsettled. Since the day when, in the Second Assembly of the Notables, I declared myself as to the fundamental question, which as yet divided many minds, I have not ceased to believe the times ripe for a grand Revolution; whereof the King, by reason of his motives, his virtues, and his supreme rank, ought to be the chief, for the Revolution could not be advantageous to the nation, without being equally so to the monarch, — to the end that the royal authority should be the safeguard of national liberty, as national liberty is the basis of royal authority."

Although the sense of this phrase was not very clear, the habit of applauding certain combinations of words led the hearers to applaud these.

Thereby encouraged, *Monsieur* raised his voice, and added, addressing the assemblage with more assurance : " Who can cite one action or speech of mine, which contradicts the principles I have just uttered? Who can show, under any circumstances in which I have been placed, that I have ceased to make the welfare of the King and of the people the sole object of my thoughts and vows? Till then, I have the right to be believed. I have never changed my sentiments or my principles, and I never shall change them."

Novelist though the writer may be, he has encroached upon history, by giving this spun-out speech of his Royal Highness in its full extent. It is well that even novel-readers should know what was the condition of a Prince at the age of thirty-five, who, at sixty, wished to grant us the charter, graced with its Article Fourteen.

As we wish to be no more unjust to Bailly than to his Royal Highness, we quote the response of the Mayor of Paris, as we have quoted *Monsieur's* speech.

Bailly said : " It is a great satisfaction for the representatives of the Parisian community, to see among them the brother of their cherished King, a King who is the restorer of French liberty. August brothers, they are united by the same sentiments! *Monsieur* has shown himself the first citizen of the kingdom, by voting, in the Second Assembly of Notables, for the admission of the Third Estate to equal legislative rights. He was then almost alone in his opinion, supported by a very small number of the friends of the people; but he adds the dignity of reason to all his other titles to national respect. *Monsieur* is therefore the chief author

of the doctrine of civil equality. Of this he gives a new example to-day, by coming voluntarily to mingle with the representatives of the people, where he wishes to be appreciated only through his patriotic opinions. These opinions are involved in the explanation which *Monsieur* has given the meeting. The Prince confronts public opinion. As a citizen, he sets a value on the judgment of his fellow-citizens; and, in the name of this assemblage, I offer *Monsieur* the tribute of respect and gratitude due to such sentiments, to the honor of his visit, and above all to the value which he attaches to the opinions of free men."

As *Monsieur* well understood, despite the eulogy on his conduct pronounced by Bailly, that conduct might be differently regarded by others. He however responded, with that paternal air which he so well knew how to assume, in situations where it might be useful: "The duty which I have discharged is painful to a virtuous heart; but I am well repaid by the sentiments which this assemblage has manifested towards me, and my mouth need only open once more, to demand pardon for those who have wronged me."

One can see that *Monsieur* pledged himself to nothing, nor did he ask anything definite of the assemblage. For whom did he crave pardon? Certainly not for Favras, because nobody really knew that Favras was culpable. Besides, Favras had not wronged *Monsieur*.

No! *Monsieur* only asked mercy for the anonymous author of the accusing circular; but this author, being unknown, had no need of municipal favor.

Historians so often pass over the crimes of princes without notice, that it is left for novelists to do the historian's office in such a case, at the risk of making a romance, as in this chapter, as tiresome as history. It

goes without saying, that when we talk of blind historians and stupid histories, we take it for granted that everybody will know to what historians and histories we allude.

Monsieur had now put into practice, on his own behalf, the advice which he gave his brother Louis. He had renounced Favras; and, as may be seen by the eulogium bestowed by the worthy Bailly, this move proved a complete success.

It was doubtless in consideration of this that Louis Sixteenth decided, on his part, to swear fidelity to the Constitution.

As the usher of the Common Council had announced to the Mayor the advent of *Monsieur*, so, on one fine morning, another usher announced to the President of the National Assembly, who that day happened to be Bureaux de Puzy, that the King, with three or four officers and two cabinet ministers, was in waiting at the door of the Riding School (which had at last been put into proper trim for the legislative sessions), as *Monsieur* had not long before knocked at the door of the Hôtel de Ville.

The representatives of the people looked up in amazement. What could the King have to say, who had so long kept away from them?

Louis the Sixteenth was invited to enter, and the President ceded to him the chair.

The hall resounded with acclamations. Apart from such men as Pétion, Camille Desmoulins, and Marat, all France was at that time Royalistic, or believed itself so.

The King had been moved to come and felicitate the Assembly on its efforts. He wished to praise the admirable division of France into geographical departments;

but above all, what he could no longer delay expressing, — what filled him to repletion, — was his ardent love for the Constitution.

The beginning of his speech (let us not forget that nobody — White or Black, Royalist or Constitutionalist, Aristocrat or Patriot — knew what the King was driving at!) caused some uneasiness; the middle of it disposed the general mind to gratitude; but the termination — oh, that termination! — roused the Assembly to enthusiasm.

The King could not resist his desire to express his love for the Little Constitution of 1791, which was not yet born. What would he think of it when completely unveiled to the light of day? There could be no greater love than the King would cherish for it.

All this was sheer fanaticism!

We do not quote the King's entire discourse. Pest! It was six pages long. It is quite enough to have given entire *Monsieur's* discourse, which was only one page, and which yet seemed terribly tedious.

However, the King's speech did not seem prolix to the Assembly, which melted into tears as it listened.

When we say the members wept, this is no metaphor. Barnave wept. Lameth wept. Duport wept. Mirabeau wept. Barrère wept. There was a veritable deluge; but where was the Ark?

The Assembly lost its head. The members arose in a body. The tribunes arose. Every man extended his hand, and took an oath of fidelity to the Constitution, — the Constitution which did not yet exist.

The King went out; but the King and the Assembly could not separate like that. The members marched out behind him. They gathered about him, and formed themselves into an escort.

When they reached the Tuileries, the Queen welcomed them.

The Queen! She was no enthusiast, — she, the severely candid daughter of Maria Theresa! She did not weep, the dignified sister of Leopold; but she presented her little son to the Deputies of the Nation and said: “Gentlemen, I share the King’s sentiments. I, also, cherish in my heart the affectionate demonstration inspired by his tender regard for the people. — Here is my son! I shall forget nothing which will teach him, at the proper time, to imitate the virtues of the best of fathers, to respect public liberty, and to maintain the laws, which I hope he will be the foremost to sustain.”

It was necessary that the unfeigned enthusiasm for such a discourse should not cool. That of the Assembly was already at white heat. It was proposed, on the instant, to take an oath of Constitutional allegiance, which was formulated on the spot. First of all the President repeated the words: “I swear to be faithful to the nation, to the laws, to the King; and to maintain, with all my might, the Constitution decreed by the National Assembly, and accepted by the King.”

All the Deputies except one raised their hands, each in his turn, and repeated, “I swear it!”

The ten days following this auspicious event — which brought joy to the Assembly, tranquillity to Paris, and peace to France — was spent in feasts, balls, and illuminations. One could hear nothing but Constitutional oaths taken on all sides. People swore everywhere, — on the Place de Grève, at the Hôtel de Ville, in the churches, on the streets, in the public squares. The altars were dressed in patriotic colors. Schools were taken thither, and scholars took the oath, as if they were already men, and knew the value of an oath.

The Deputies commanded a *Te Deum* to be sung, and were present in a body. There at the altar, in the face of God, the oath was again solemnly taken.

Only the King did not go to Notre Dame, and consequently did not take this sacred oath.

His absence was remarked; but everybody was so happy, so confident, so hopeful, that everybody was content with the first excuse that anybody offered for his absence.

"Why were you not at the *Te Deum*? Why did you not swear on the altar of your fathers?" asked the Queen.

"Because, though I am willing to *lie*, Madame, I will not *perjure* myself."

The Queen breathed more freely. Until then, like all the world, she had believed in the good faith of the King.

CHAPTER XLV.

A GENTLEMAN.

THE King's visit to the Assembly took place on February 4, 1790. Twelve days later, on the night of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth of the same month, during the absence of the Governor of the Châtelet, — who had asked and obtained permission, that very day, to go to Soissons, so as to be with his dying mother, — a man presented himself at the door of the prison, bearing an order, signed by the Lieutenant of Police, — an order which authorized the visitor to confer with Monsieur de Favras, without witnesses.

Whether this order was genuine or counterfeit, we dare not say ; but at any rate, the sub-director — who was roused from sleep to inspect it — pronounced it good ; and notwithstanding the hour was far advanced into the night, he gave permission for the bearer of the order to be introduced into the cell of Favras.

After assuring himself of the faithfulness of the turn-keys inside and the sentinels outside the prison, the sub-director returned to his bed, in order to finish the night so disagreeably interrupted.

The visitor — under pretence of having dropped an important paper, when he drew his order from his pocket-book — took the lamp, and searched all over the floor for it, until the sub-director had regained his chamber.

Then the visitor declared that he must have left this paper on his nightstand at home ; but if anybody found

it, he begged it might be returned to him when he went away.

Then, returning the light to the turnkey in waiting, he asked to be conducted to the dungeon where Favras was confined. The jailer opened a door, let the Unknown enter, passed through after him, closed the door, and locked it behind them. He then looked at the Unknown curiously, as if he expected, at any moment, that he might receive from him some important communication.

They descended a dozen steps, and entered a subterranean corridor. There a second door presented itself, which the jailer opened and shut like the first.

The Unknown and his guide now found themselves on a sort of landing-place, having before them another flight of stairs, leading downward. The Unknown here paused, and looked searchingly into the shadows of the dark corridor. When he was sure that the obscurity was as solitary as it was silent, he asked: "You are the turnkey Louis?"

"Yes," responded the jailer.

"A brother from the American Lodge?"

"Yes."

"You were placed here a week ago, by some mysterious agency, in order to accomplish an unknown purpose?"

"Yes."

"Are you ready to do that work?"

"I am ready."

"You are to receive orders from a certain man —?"

"Yes, from the Anointed One."

"How were you to recognize him?"

"By three letters embroidered on his breastplate."

"I am that man, and here are the three letters." At these words the visitor threw back his lace collar; and on his breast he displayed the three embroidered letters,

L. P. D., the influence whereof we have had occasion to note more than once in the course of these narratives.

"Master, I am at your orders," said the jailer, bowing.

"Very well! Open the cell of Favras, and hold yourself in readiness to obey orders."

The jailer bowed without answering, walked on before to light the way, and whispered, as they stopped before a low door, "Here it is."

The Unknown made a sign with his head. The key, introduced into the lock, twice grated, and the door opened.

Although taking the most rigorous measures for the security of the prisoner, even assigning him a cell twenty feet underground, the authorities had him treated with the attention due to his rank. He had a regular bed with white curtains. Near the bed was a table, covered with books, ink, quills, and paper, intended for use in the preparation of his defence. Above them all towered an extinguished lamp. In a corner, on a second table, glittered several toilet utensils, taken from an elegant dressing-case, which bore the Marquis's coat of arms. Against the wall was a small glass, belonging to the same dressing-case.

The prisoner slept soundly. Although the door opened, and the Unknown approached the bedside, — although the jailer placed the second lamp near the first, and then went out again, at a sign from the visitor, — yet neither the noise nor the motion disturbed the prisoner's slumber.

The Unknown for a moment gazed with deep melancholy upon the sleeping man. Then, as if remembering that time was precious, whatever his regret at troubling such sweet repose, he laid his hand on the sleeper's shoulder.

The prisoner started and turned quickly, with eyes

wide open, as is the habit of those who fall asleep in the expectation of being roused by some painful intelligence.

"Be calm, Monsieur," said the Unknown, "it is a friend."

Favras looked at his nocturnal visitor with some suspicion, mingled with astonishment that a friend should be searching for him after midnight, eighteen or twenty feet below the ground. Then, suddenly recalling his thoughts, he said: "Ah! the Baron Zannone? —"

"Myself, dear Marquis!"

Favras glanced smilingly about, and pointed the Baron to a stool, free from both books and clothes. "Be kind enough to sit down!" he said.

"My dear Marquis, I come to propose to you something which does not admit of long discussion. Besides, we have no time to lose."

"What do you propose, Baron? I hope it is not another loan."

"Why so?"

"Because the guaranties which I could give you appear not to be altogether safe —"

"That would not matter with me, Marquis. On the contrary, I am quite ready to offer you a million."

"Me?" laughed Favras.

"Yes, you; but unless you accept certain conditions, I cannot make you this offer."

"Then, as you have already warned me that you are in haste, my dear Baron, come to business at once."

"You know that to-morrow you are to be tried?"

"Yes, I have heard something of the sort," responded the Marquis.

"You know that the judges, before whom you are to appear, are the same who acquitted Augeard and Besenval?"

"Yes."

"You know that neither of them would have been acquitted, but for the all-powerful intervention of the Crown?"

"Yes," responded Favras for the third time, but without showing the least change in his voice.

"You hope, undoubtedly, that the Court will do for you what it did for your predecessors?"

"Those with whom I have had the honor to be connected, in the enterprise which I headed, know what ought to be done in my behalf, Monsieur; and whatever they do will be well done."

"They have already taken their stand in regard to you, Marquis, and I am able to tell you exactly what they have done."

Favras evinced no desire to be thus informed.

Nevertheless the visitor continued: "*Monsieur* went to the Hôtel de Ville, and declared that he hardly knew you; that in 1772 you enlisted in his Swiss Guards; that in 1775 you withdrew from that regiment; and that he had not seen you since that time."

Favras bowed, in token of acquiescence.

"As to the King, not only had he no thought of flight (as he says), but more than that, — on the fourth day of the current month, he went to the National Assembly, and swore his adherence to the Constitution."

A smile passed over the Marquis's lips.

"You doubt me?" asked the Baron.

"I do not say so."

"Thus you see, you cannot rely upon *Monsieur*, you cannot rely upon the King."

"What then, Baron?"

"You will come before your judges —"

"You do me the honor to tell me so."

"You will be condemned — "

"It is probable !"

"To death !"

"That is possible !" and Favras bowed his head, as if ready to receive the blow that should come to him, whatever it might be.

"But," urged the Baron, "do you know by *what* death, my dear Marquis ?"

"Are there two deaths, my dear Baron ?"

"Oh, there are six. There is impalement, quartering, the wheel, pressure, the gallows, decapitation ; or, rather, a week ago there were all these methods of death. To-day, as you say, there is only one, — the gibbet."

"The gibbet ?"

"Yes. The National Assembly, after having declared all men equal before the law, has now proclaimed equality in death. Nobles and commons are to go out of the world by the same door, — they will be hanged !"

"Ah — ah !" said Favras.

"Condemned to death, you will hang, — a sorrowful ending, even for one who does not fear death, — I am sure of that, — but shrinks from the gallows."

"So, Monsieur ! Have you come hither solely to tell me all this good news, or have you something still better in store ?"

"I have come to tell you that all is ready for your escape, — to say that in ten minutes, if you wish, you may be outside your prison, and in twenty-four hours, outside of France."

Favras reflected an instant, — not, however, that the Baron's offer appeared to cause him any emotion. Then he said : "Does this offer come from the King or his Royal Highness ?"

"No, it comes from myself."

Favras looked at the Baron. "From you? And why from you?"

"Because of my interest in you, Marquis."

"What interest can you take in me, having only met me twice before?"

"No need to see a man twice in order to know him. True gentlemen are rare, and I wish to save *one*, — I do not say to France, merely, but to humanity."

"You have no other reason?"

"This, Monsieur, that having negotiated with you this loan of two millions, — and you having disbursed the money, — I really furnished you the means of going forward in the plot now unearthed; and consequently I contributed involuntarily to your death."

Favras smiled. "If you have committed no other crime, sleep in peace, for I absolve you."

"How?" cried the Baron, "you refuse to flee?"

Favras extended his hand. "I thank you from the depths of my heart; I thank you, in the name of my wife and my children; but I refuse."

"Perhaps you think our plans badly laid, and fear lest an attempted escape should aggravate your case?"

"I believe, Monsieur, that you are a prudent man, and — I may add — adventurous, when you come in person to propose this escape; but I repeat to you, I will not flee."

"Perhaps you fear, being compelled to quit France, that you will leave your wife and children in misery? I have provided against this, Monsieur, and can offer you this wallet, in which are a hundred thousand francs in banknotes."

Favras looked at the Baron with a species of admiration. Then he said, with singular serenity, and shaking his head: "This astonishes you, Monsieur, and you ask

yourself, without daring to ask me, whence arises this strange resolution to go to the end, and die, if need be, whatever the manner of death."

"I own it!"

"Well, I will tell you. I am a Royalist, but not after the manner of those who emigrate to foreign lands, or play the hypocrite in Paris. My opinion is not based on calculation or interest. It is a worship, a creed, a religion. I must look on kings as I look on an archbishop or a pope, — as the visible representatives of that religion whereof I have spoken. If I flee, it may be thought that the King or *Monsieur* made me do so, and is therefore my accomplice; and *Monsieur*, who has denied me at the tribune, and the King, who feigns not to know me, would be destroyed by a blow which strikes in the dark. Religions fail, when there are no more martyrs. Well, I will revive *my* religion, by dying for it. This will be a reproach to the past, an encouragement to the future."

"But think of the manner of the death which awaits you!"

"The more infamous the death, the more meritorious the sacrifice. The Messiah died on a cross, between two thieves."

"I should understand you, Marquis," said the Baron, "if your death would do for Royalism, what Christ's death did for the world; but such are the sins of kings, that I fear they will not only require the cleansing blood of a gentleman, a nobleman, but that even a king's blood will not suffice for their justification."

"That will be as it pleases God, Monsieur; but in this age of irresolution and doubt, when so many fail in their duty, I can die with the consolation of having done mine."

"Oh no, Monsieur," said the Baron, with an air of

impatience, "you can die simply with regret at being uselessly sacrificed."

"When the disarmed soldier will not flee, when he awaits the enemy, when he braves death, when he meets it, he knows perfectly well that his death is useless; but he also knows that desertion would be shameful, and he prefers to die!"

"I cannot stay to argue," said the Baron, drawing out his watch, which pointed to three in the morning. "We have yet an hour. I will sit by the table, and read half an hour. Meanwhile, think it over. In half an hour you can give me a definite answer."

Taking a chair he seated himself before the table, with his back to the prisoner, opened a book, and began to read.

"Good-night, Monsieur!" said Favras, as he turned his face to the wall, doubtless to think without distraction.

The reader looked at his watch two or three times, more impatient than the prisoner. When the half-hour had rolled away, he arose and approached the bed; but he waited in vain, for Favras did not turn. Bending over him the Baron perceived, by his regular breathing, that the prisoner was really asleep.

"Well, I am defeated," he said to himself; "but judgment is not yet pronounced. Perhaps he still hopes!"

Not wishing to awake the unfortunate man, for whom a sleep so long and so profound was in store, the Baron took a quill, and wrote, on a sheet of blank paper, the following note:

When the sentence is pronounced, when the Marquis de Favras is condemned to death, when he has no longer any hope, either from judges, from *Monsieur*, or from the King, — if he changes his mind, he has only to appeal to the turnkey

Louis, and say *I have decided to flee!* and means will be found to favor his flight.

Even when the Marquis is in the fatal death-cart, when he makes his public confession in front of Notre Dame Cathedral, when he crosses, with bare feet and corded hands, the short space which separates the vestibule of the Hôtel de Ville — where he will enter to make his dying will — from the gibbet erected in the Place de Grève, the Marquis has only to say, in a loud voice, *I wish to be saved!* and he shall be saved.

CAGLIOSTRO.

Then the visitor took the lamp and again approached the bed, to see if the prisoner had not awakened. Finding him still asleep, he went — though not without returning several times — to the door of the cell, behind which the turnkey Louis stood, upright and immovable, with that placid resignation which belongs to those adepts who are ready for all sacrifices, in order to attain the accomplishment of any grand work which they have undertaken.

“Well, master,” he asked, “what am I to do?”

“Remain in the prison, and do whatever Monsieur de Favras commands.”

The turnkey bowed, took the lamp from Cagliostro's hands, and walked respectfully before him, like a lackey who lights his master's way.

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